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Rolling Stone

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DUTCH
TRANCE
SUPERSTAR
ARMIN VAN
BUUREN ON
RETURNING
TO INDIA

Q&A:
FLORENCE
WELCH

DEAD AFTER JERRY

THE SHAMBLING,
STRAINED
AFTERLIFE - AND
IMPROBABLE
TRIUMPH -
OF THE GREATEST
JAM BAND OF
THEM ALL

The Rise Of The Female DJs

ELECTROVERTZ ARE AMONG THE MANY WOMEN
FIRING UP THE NEW EDM SCENE IN INDIA

THE SUPERSONICS
CALLING IT QUITS AGAIN

IN THE MIX
INDIAN-AMERICAN
JAZZ SINGER SACHAL
VASANDANI'S
NEW ALBUM

NOTE
DEFICIT
WHY ARE SO
MANY INDIAN
BANDS
DISGRUNTLED?

HELL'S
AMBASSADORS
AUSTRIAN DEATH
METAL ACT
BELPHEGOR IN INDIA
THIS MONTH





The Doors Tribute by Luke Kenny LIVE

BREAK ON

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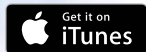
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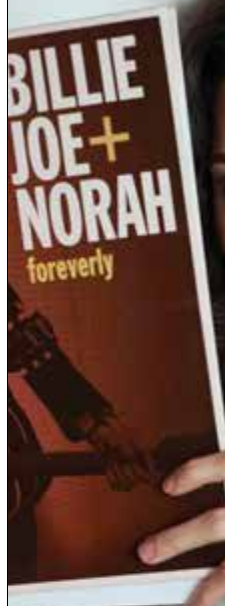
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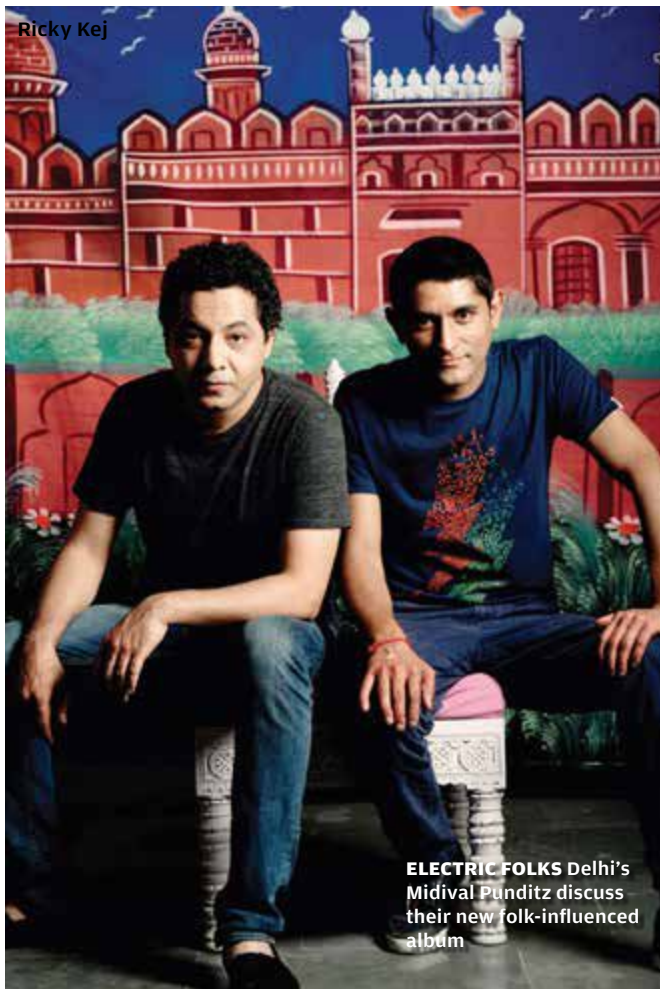


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FISTS IN THE AIR Delhi's Undying Inc will perform at BOA this month

ONLINE EXCLUSIVES

Bangalore Open Air [BOA] brings to stage some of the best names in Indian and international metal including UK grindcore band Napalm Death, Austrian death metallers Belphegor and death grind band Gutsplit from Mumbai and Delhi metal band Undying Inc among others. We bring you all the action from the festival this year

go sharp

BLACKBERRYS



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Love Letters & Advice



Coshish Needn't Try

I feel fusion bands in India need to work harder to prove and promote themselves as they take on the mammoth task of bridging two different disciplines of music. But Coshish seems to be doing a good job of that. This DVD box is good step towards making people appreciate their own songs and the beauty of live music.

Parul Sharma, New Delhi

Faith Restored

I didn't know that Jon Hudson had a real estate job alongside trying to make a living as a

musician. It's shocking, coming from such a celebrated guitarist and musician. But I love the fact that he is so humble and is not ashamed of his past. The world needs more guys like him.

Radhika Gupta, Mumbai

Music Crossing Borders, Literally

Across the world, music is so inspirational. Shows that people can come over any kind of adversity for what they love. And that music has the power to heal. I just hope they connect with families soon. God bless them.

Judith D'Souza, Bengaluru

The Return of Sufjan Stevens

Although the new single "Carrie and Lowell" makes me miss his Illinois album, as his sound has changed a little, but more than anything, I am glad that he is back to making music. I really hope he decides to tour India sometime. He has plenty of fans here.

Antara Ghosh, Kolkata

Armin in India

Once again! The king of trance music is coming back to India. And it is great to see that Indian audiences too are warming up to international artists. Congratulations to him on his 700th episode of ASOT. Can't wait to party again in June.

Varun Bansal, Gurgaon



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Rock & Roll

SPILLING IT
“He was struggling,” says Koster of James (left) during the sessions.

Remaking My Morning Jacket

Jim James mixes it up and goes to dark places on ‘The Waterfall’ By Patrick Doyle

IT WAS ALMOST TOO GOOD TO LAST: In October 2013, My Morning Jacket gathered to record their seventh album, in a hilltop mansion in Stinson Beach, the Northern California town where Jerry Garcia lived for years. The band would record during the day, then

cook dinner together and walk on the beach, sometimes sharing a vaporizer pen. “There was nobody for miles and miles, like a deserted paradise,” says frontman Jim James. “At night, it was like you were inside the sky, the stars right next to your head.”

Then, one day, James was moving an amp when he felt a sharp pain shoot through his back. “All of a sudden I was in bed, just in agony,” he says. He would have surgery for a herniated disc and

spend the next two months recovering. When the band reconvened in Stinson Beach, James often had to cancel sessions, sometimes recording as he lay on a couch. “He was definitely struggling,” says keyboardist Bo Koster.

Somehow, James managed to channel the turmoil into dozens of new songs. “Something special was flowing out of him,” says Koster. “It felt like stuff was just spilling out.” The result was *The Waterfall*, which

the band says is the first of two *My Morning Jacket* albums to come in the next year. The title “is a metaphor for how life is constantly beating you down, and you really have to take time to stop it and get through,” says James. One of the songs, the desperate rocker “Big Decisions,” is about why people don’t change what makes them unhappy. (James says it was partly about “sitting at lunch with friends for the umpteenth time, going, ‘Oh, God, I fucking hate this thing’ – like touring.”) Other tracks – such as the smoky, falsetto-heavy finale, “Only Memories Remain,” and the acoustic “Get the Point,” where James sings flatly, “I think our love is done” – deal with the end of a relationship.

“They are influenced by specific situations, but I’d rather not talk about it, because I want love in my life,” says James. “In recent years, I’ve been trying to figure out, ‘What have I done wrong in every relationship I’ve been in until now?’ and tried to make them better.”

Sitting on the porch overlooking a river at La La Land studios in the band’s hometown of Louisville, Kentucky, James calls his latest health incident the result of years of “being unkind to my body” – too much touring, too much partying. “It creates this vicious cycle.” (He credits meditation and Pilates for his ongoing recovery.)

The band took a break at the end of 2013, after a summer tour with Bob Dylan and Wilco that ended up being a mixed bag. “It was pitched to us like, ‘There are gonna be lots of collaborations, and Bob wants to play with you guys,’” says guitarist Carl Broemel. “That didn’t happen.” The highlight was playing with Bob Weir, who was on the bill for some dates, and who joined them on Dead staples like “I Know You Rider” and “Brown-Eyed Women.” “He was so open to talking, the kind of things we were hoping Dylan would be,” says James. “Having him there was like this great gift.” Adds Weir, “I had a lot of fun playing with those guys. They’re a very, very good band.”

James kept going during the group’s hiatus, jumping straight into a tour behind his solo album *Regions of Light and Sound of God*, then heading to L.A. to join the New Basement Tapes project, writing songs with Elvis Costello and Marcus Mumford (“That was magic,” says James). “He had the solo tour right on the heels of maybe two and a half years of touring on *Circuital*,” says Broemel. “We were re-



“‘Waterfall’ is a metaphor for how life beats you down. You really have to take time to get through.”

ally tired, and he was hitting it harder than ever.”

After recording live and straight-to-tape on *Circuital*, the band took a more modern approach on *The Waterfall*, entering the studio with dozens of song fragments and often stringing them together digitally, resulting in sprawling, dark tracks like “In Its Infancy (the Waterfall)” and “Spring (Among the Living).” The latter is a dissonant epic that the band recorded before James, on his laptop, turned it into a sound collage with overlapping sections. “We had never done anything like that before,” says Broemel. Adds drummer Patrick Hallahan, “It got mixed reactions because it didn’t happen organically. Then I started hearing it a different way.”

ON THE BEACH In Stinson Beach, California, where *The Waterfall* was recorded. Left: Onstage with Elvis Costello and Marcus Mumford as The Basement Tapes in 2014.

This summer, the band will hit the road, switching between multnight runs at large theaters and festivals like Bonnaroo and Governors Ball. Despite being one of the most popular touring groups on the road, My Morning Jacket still feel like music-business outsiders. “Having a hit would be awesome, but I don’t know if it’s meant to happen,” says James. He calls pop radio “such a waste of time” and has even harsher words for nearby Nashville: “I feel like modern country is deliberately dumbing down the human race. They’re deliberately making people take glory in being uneducated and racist, and it’s just sad. I think it’s absolute mind control.”

That night, the bandmates play the new album in its entirety for a small crowd of friends and family at Louisville’s Headliners Music Hall, where they last played in 2003. The band feels out the possibilities of new songs “Compound Fracture,” a synth stomper with a hint of T. Rex, and the psychedelic, tribal “Like a River.” During “Only Memories Remain,” James starts playing a winding arpeggio riff, and the band latches on. “We’ve developed this connection where someone will do something and four heads will turn and start to play it with you,” says Koster. “But it’s frustrating when people call us a ‘jam band’ – there’s none of that noodling.” For the encore, the band reaches all the way back to 2001’s *At Dawn*, and James reminisces about the time he was kicked out of the venue for being “super fucked up” during a Wilco show. “It’s such a trip to play here,” he says. “I’m so proud.”



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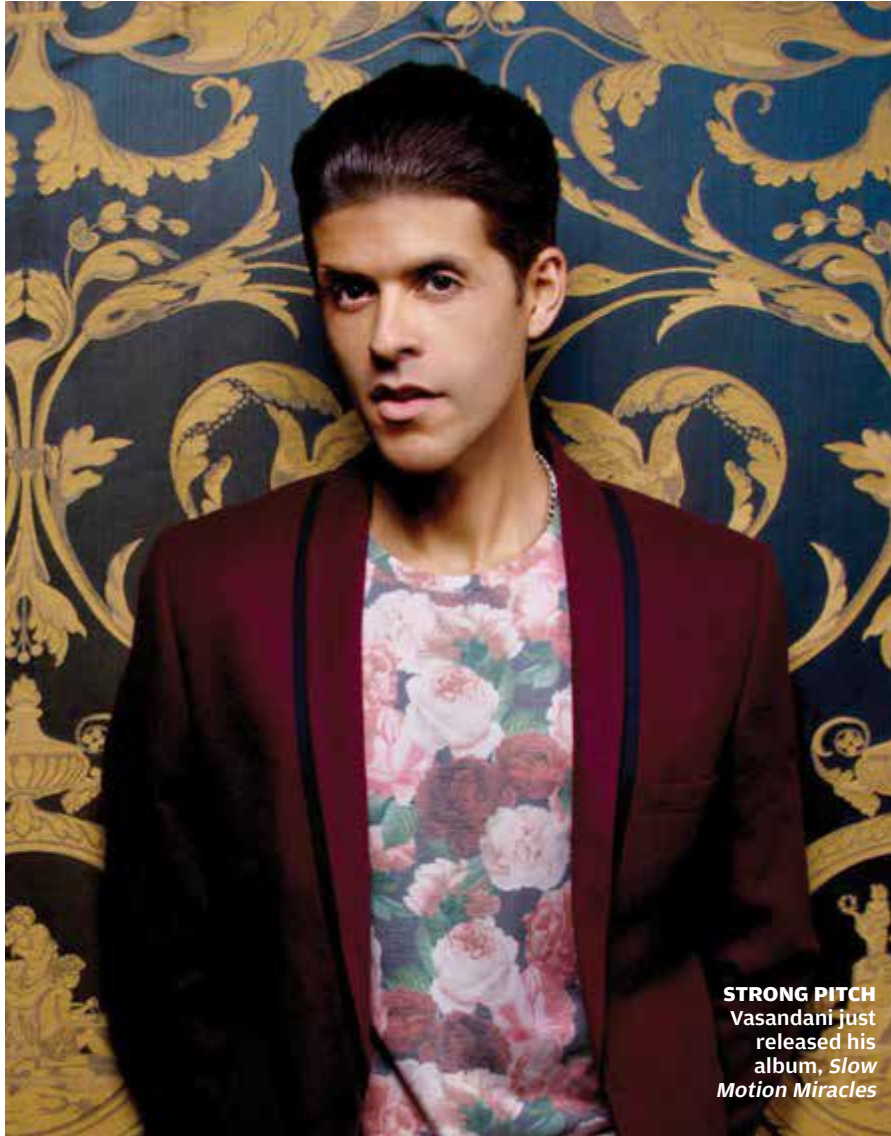
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In The Mix

Indian-American jazz singer Sachal Vasandani says his just-released fourth album is his biggest music milestone



A YOUNG MUSICIAN WHO PRESENTS jazz mostly in its unadulterated form [read no electronica overdose] is susceptible to losing the interest of potential fans under 40, or 60 even. But singer Sachal Vasandani doesn't seem to mind the risk, and he is quick to tell you that he is anything but old-fashioned. Says the 37-year-old singer, "I don't have a fogey bone in my body, except the kneecap on my right leg. I'm youth till I die, folks."

An Indian-American who grew up in Chicago, Vasandani found early success when he was named the Jazz Vocalist of the

Year by *Down Beat* magazine in 1999. As a child, he listened to a wide variety of music including Hindustani classical. It helped, of course, that he had jazz-lovers for parents and lived in a city famous for its vibrant jazz bars. *Slow Motion Miracles* is his newly released album, which he considered his biggest music milestone. "It's vulnerable and uplifting and big," he says.

His previous albums - *Hi-Fly*, 2011; *We Move*, 2009 and *Eyes Wide Open*, 2007 - had featured a mix of his favourite jazz standards and pop covers along with a few originals. The new 10-track collection, on the other hand, is a meet-and-greet be-

tween jazz and its distant, motley family, like electronica, Afrobeat, pop and hip-hop. Its emotional landscape touches the themes of abandonment, self-doubt, and coming to terms with change that has not been good.

What is most remarkable about Vasandani's music is his uncomplicated vocal style, which reminds the listener that expressions of pain, angst and loss are perhaps most impactful when you don't make a big fuss about those emotions. Says the singer and composer, "A lot of these songs got their start in wanting to document some of my shenanigans at home in New York or on the road. (I) made some discoveries about how to love and live fully in the moment," says the singer-composer.

The singer says that getting "way into the music I hear and especially the music I make - this is what keeps me going, and young and silly." On *Slow Motion Miracles*, he has indeed gone way into the music he loves. And at times, with musicians he loves. On the soothing "Afternoon sun," you can hear Grammy Award-nominated young pianist Taylor Eigsti lending his charm. Vasandani jokes about how he pitched the song to Eigsti: "Can you imagine saying to him - 'I'm thinking about staring out at the end of the earth at this part...Got anything?' And watch and listen as he conjures up the perfect tapestry on the organ in that exact moment." The upbeat and fresh, "Marie" is a co-composition with friend and songwriter David Brophy. The album itself is produced by noted trumpeter and Grammy recipient, Michael Leonhart, who has worked with the likes of Steely Dan and Bobby McFerrin. "One fun thing in the recording session was bringing Normyn, Michael's dog, to the studio when we were recording bass and drums. That was the first time I'd ever been around a dog at the studio, but she'd been there many times...she was a laugh and helped to lighten the whole vibe," he remembers. Leonhart also co-wrote the buoyant "Cover the water," the song that fetched Vasandani the most heart-warming comment he's got from a fan on the new record. "I received this tweet yesterday: 'Cover The Water gives me life,'" he shares.

Vasandani is not new to the Indian music scene; he performed here in 2013. Does he plan to return soon? "I can't wait to get to India. The last time I was there the audiences in Mumbai and Delhi and Pune were so warm and receptive. And we had great food and none of my band got sick, and I saw some family and we had a ball." Meanwhile, he is also thinking about making a plan for giving shape to all kinds of ideas that are still in his head. "Different styles: big band, duos, me and a guitar on a beach somewhere, soundscapes that no one's ever heard and only live in dreams." **NIRMIKA SINGH**



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Hozier Hits the Heartland

DAWN TO DUSK When Hozier was growing up in Ireland, he saw the United States through the eyes of his heroes: bluesmen like Muddy Waters, Howlin' Wolf and John Lee Hooker. "The more I listened to the music, the more I became fascinated with America," Hozier says. "I was drawn to the mythology of one man, one voice, one guitar." Recently, Hozier has gotten to see the country himself, as one of this year's biggest breakout stars. The singer-songwriter, 25, has been zigzagging across the U.S. since his song "Take Me to Church" exploded worldwide last fall. We caught up with him in Tulsa, Oklahoma, where he explored the city's musical history and present-day quirks before playing a sold-out gig.

NICK MURRAY



LOCAL FLAVOR

Grabbing lunch at Harden's, a 76-year-old burger joint in Tulsa (above). Left: Visiting the Golden Driller, a roadside monument to oil workers. Below right: Posing with a fan at Harden's.



ROAD WARRIOR

Hozier takes morning tea on his tour bus, which arrived in Tulsa from Texas the night before.



THIS MACHINE FASCINATES IRISHMEN

At the Woody Guthrie Center, checking out a guitar owned by the folk singer (and Oklahoma native).

SHOWTIME

Hozier onstage at Tulsa's Brady Theater before a sellout crowd of nearly 3,000.

trulymadly
UNSINGLE

The BIG DATE

SIX INSIGHTS INTO INDIA'S DATING HABITS

1. THERE'S ALWAYS ROOM FOR GROOMING

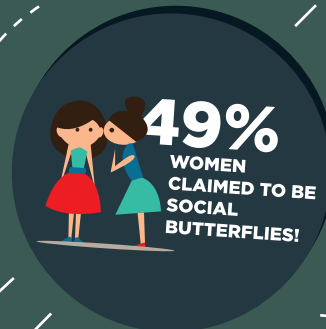
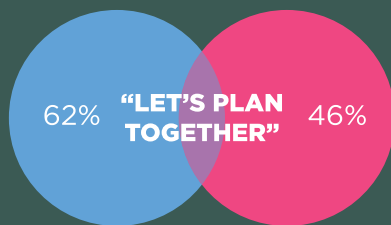
61% WOMEN Like men who make an effort to look good.

39% MEN Believe grooming is best left to women.

2. PLAN IT AND PAY UP

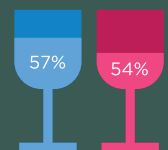


Who plans the date, anyway?



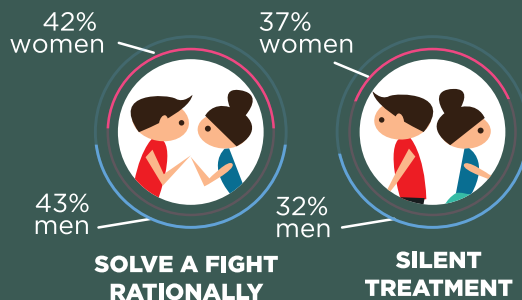
"YES!"

Should guys pay on the first date?



*Only 37% of the women still want guys to make the plans!

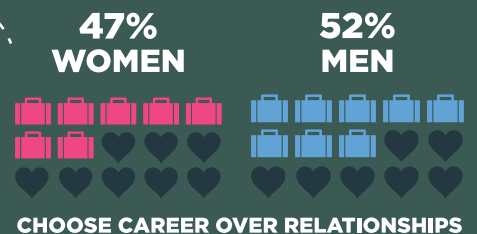
3. ALL'S FAIR IN DATING AND WAR



f **47% MEN | 48% WOMEN**
Are open to sharing their Facebook passwords with their partners

4. SECRETS OF SUCCESS

Don't ask them to choose if you don't want to find out!



5. DEAL-MAKERS AND DEAL-BREAKERS



6. SOCIAL SCENARIOS



TOP TRENDS & #EPICFAILS

Truly Madly users described themselves in hashtags which made them appear more social.

MOST POPULAR

#MusicSnob
#Foodie
#MovieManiac

LEAST POPULAR

#Scholar
#EarlyBird
#Bookworm



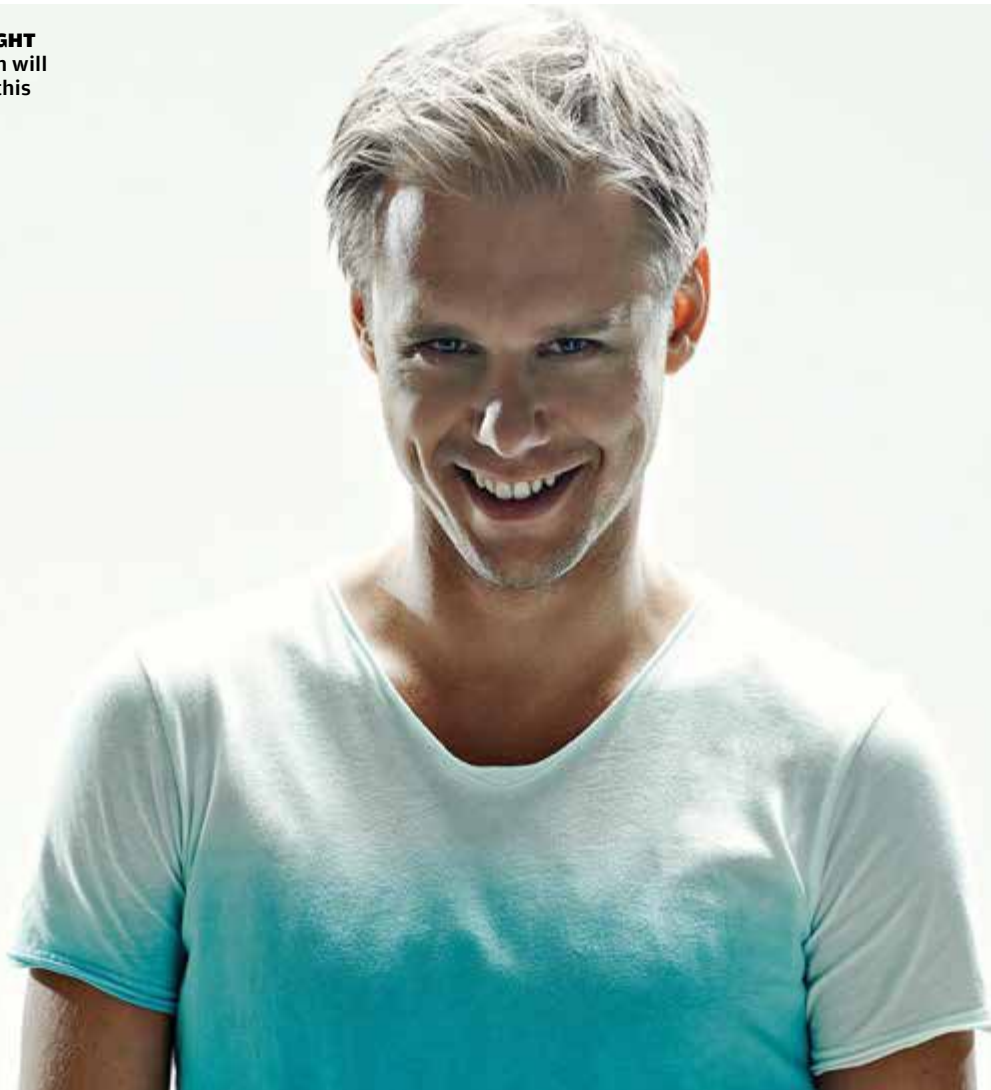
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An exclusive research by Truly Madly, 2015

SAVING YOUR NIGHT
Armin van Buuren will perform in India this month



Full Focus

Dutch trance superstar Armin van Buuren talks about his switch from court room to dance floor ahead of his fifth trip to India

WHEN ARMIN VAN BUUREN IS on tour, little else gets in the way of the unstoppable musical force that he is. Last year, he went on to perform a headlining set at the spectacular Tomorrowland festival in Belgium soon after his son was born. Says the Dutch techno producer, “I had come straight from the hospital after my wife just gave birth to a son. So I dedicated my whole set to my newborn son.” While the producer is refreshingly candid when he says, “I

don’t think that trance is the most popular sound right now in electronic dance music,” the packed arenas that he plays to would have you believe otherwise. The trance superstar remains relevant because he is constantly innovating, which is why he strapped on a MYO arm band to trigger stage lights and effects during his recent shows. He says, “The Myo bracelets came from a conversation with my art director Sander Reneman. He was talking about using the Kinect technology that’s in

the Xbox 360. I think Skrillex was already rehearsing with that a bit too. We took it one little step further. You have to step up your game. That’s what every DJ is doing right now.” Ahead of his visit to India this month, the producer shared stories about his sound, influences and beginnings with **ROLLING STONE India**

The ‘Armin Only’ show that you played in Mumbai last year was one of the most theatrical concert experiences in India. How is this show going to top that?

It’s going to be an intense night of eclectic trance, state of the art production and stellar line-up. I’m bringing to India the world’s first festival programmed around a radio show. It’s definitely closest to my heart as it’s one of my most ambitious trance tours. This was one of my biggest dreams. I think I’m going to be the first DJ to ever own a festival, like a proper festival, with several arenas. A State of Trance [ASOT], my radio show, will now be turned into a full-scale festival. So I will have multiple rooms in a big arena. And it makes me very proud,

not because of me, but because I really have a vision now where I can help other artists to show their creativity to a bigger crowd.

Your radio show ASOT has been running for almost 15 years with over 700 episodes. Did you imagine the show to run for so long when you started?

ASOT and Armin Only are my most important projects. I've always been a big fan of radio and I love being able to give new talent a stage to shine on. That's what I love most. Don't forget I had a lot of help in the early days from other artists and it feels great to be able to do something back. Second, I really love to connect the audience at the event with the people listening on the streams. Literally turning the world into a dance floor by spreading audio and video to anyone who cares to see it. I started off with hosting ASOT so the show will always hold a special place in my heart.

Through my radio show I have an ideal platform to really communicate with my fans. There's no room for misinterpretation. If you listen to ASOT every week, then you'll know the latest in trance and progressive, you'll know the tracks that I like, and you'll know the tracks that I'm not too sure about. I always envisioned doing A State of Trance just for a couple years and then moving on, but the trance genre is currently reinventing itself.

Any new artists on the horizon that excite you?

Mark Sixma! He's on fire! Be sure to check out his version of "Adagio for Strings"! David Gravell, Hazem Beltagui, Jordan Suckley, and many more! I'm a DJ and I think it's my job to be curious as to what drives people to like certain tracks. I'm very hungry to understand that. I think it's even my job to understand why people like "Gangam Style" even though I would never ever play that in my set. I want to understand the emotion behind it. I want to know why people like it. That's my job. I'm curious. Most of the tracks on the Billboard list don't really appeal to me because my heart is really with trance music. But I think it's an important lesson to learn from every style, every genre. What pitfalls you have and what not. You have to learn.

You've said that you've been influenced by artists like Jean Michel Jarre. Do you still turn to their music for inspiration?

German techno pioneer Klaus Schulze as well as German producer Oliver Lieb's 1999-released work "Netherworld" is something I draw inspiration from. I was into a Dutch master mixer, Ben Liebrand. He was one of first guys in the Netherlands to mix two records together, which everybody does now while they're cooking dinner. But at that time, in 1977, mixing two records together was very

new. He had In the Mix, a very popular radio show. He made combinations of records that I found very interesting, which he used to create a whole new record, which I found so inspiring. I knew the original records and wanted to know how he did it. My parents listened to the Pink Floyd record The Dark Side of the Moon. To this day, it's still the best sounding record I've ever heard. It was made in 1973 and if I compare it to a lot of other records it's just the best sound. It was recorded on tape and then transferred to vinyl. It adds a certain warmth. I'm a bit nostalgic like that.

Earlier on in my career, I may have tried to really stick to a specific sound. With my last album, Intense, I think I was really able to let that go. I just go into the studio, and I do what feels right. And I don't think about being commercial, or not commercial, or being trance, or non-trance, or making EDM or non-EDM — or just thinking about how a track should impact my crowd or whatever. I just make music because I want to make it and because it feels right, and I know now for a fact that no matter what you do as an artist, no matter what decisions you make... whether you stick to your safe sound and your safe

haven or whatever you've been doing throughout the years, or whether you try a new sound, you'll always win and lose fans. The only responsibility that I have is towards myself to make music that I really like. Just as a person, I can't do the same thing over and over again. It just bores me. I made a track back in 1999, which was a huge success, called "Communication," and I still love that track.

It's still very dear to me. But I can't make another "Communication." It would just bore me

Back in 2003, you returned to complete your graduation from law school while you were already a star in the world of trance music. Why did you think it was important for a world famous DJ to have a law degree?

You know I never officially made the decision to become a DJ. I wanted to be a doctor because my dad was a general practitioner and I liked everything that had to do with medical stuff. But, in Holland, only 1,500 students can join the basic medical school each year to become a doctor because it's very expensive. So I opted for law. I'm not sure if I'd go into law but never say never. I still like to talk about the subject but I think if you're born a DJ, you will die a DJ. It's an addiction. And if it isn't DJing, it's making music.

With a rigorous schedule how do unwind while on tour?

Well thank God for Skype as I stay connected to my family. I also catch up on a lot of sleep. Very few people know that I dig autobiographies. I just can't simply get enough of reading.

IN THE NEWS

Thaikkudam Bridge to Tour the UK this June and July

Kochi-based fusion group Thaikkudam Bridge are all set to embark on their first UK tour this June and July. Formed by Siddharth and Govind Menon and known for their fresh fusion of rock, reggae and Indian classical music, the band will perform select concerts in England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, with more details coming out soon. Formed in June 2013, Thaikkudam Bridge reached a new level of popularity with their appearances on the Kappa TV YouTube channel, gaining more than a million views for tracks like "Fish Rock" and their covers of songs like Metallica's "Nothing Else Matters."

The F16's Prep Debut Album

Electro-indie rockers The F-16's are currently recording their upcoming debut album, which will be their follow-up to their 2013 EP Kaleidoscope.



Says guitarist Abhinav Krishnaswamy, "We're done with the track listing, and are about halfway done with the recording process right now. It's going to include ten tracks, and we're hoping to release it later in the year." About how different the album will be from Kaleidoscope, Krishnaswamy replied, "It's going to pick up from where that EP left off, but with different musical influences. I think our trip to the Converse Rubber Tracks studio in New York really changed the way we write songs and record, and the new album is going to show that."

Bevar Sea set to release Second LP

Bengaluru stoner-doom metallers Bevar Sea are ready to release their sophomore album Invoke the Bizarre later in 2015, which will be the follow-up to their eponymous 2012 debut album. While the album was recorded in Bangalore on November 2014, it was mixed and mastered by engineer Matt Lynch of Mysterious Mammal Recording in Los Angeles. Bevar Sea also premiered a track titled "Sleeping Pool" from the LP earlier this May, which can be streamed on their Soundcloud page. The Bengaluru band will be playing the next edition of Control Alt Delete next month in Mumbai along with Bhayanak Maut, Escher's Knot, Zygnema, and other well-known Indian metal bands.

The Note Deficit

Why are so many Indian musicians disgruntled?

LAST MONTH, MUMBAI ELECTRONICA artist LoboCop posted a status update to his Facebook page that intended to shame the owner of the venue that had booked him for a DJ night and not paid his dues. While the social media outrage was enough for the owner to pay the artist the fees he owed him, compounding the problem of being a performing band or artist in the country is the fact that they are often not paid enough.

Drummer Jai Row Kavi from Mumbai, one of the most sought after drummers in the country, playing with as many as five bands, tells us that he may want to move out of India after a couple of years. Says the 28-year-old drummer, "Bands are getting paid shit here. There may be more festivals but bands aren't really getting paid. Bollywood gigs [sessions] are the only ones that pay." Most bands are paid anywhere between Rs 10,000-40,000 for festival slots and shows, with A-listers being paid Rs 75,000 for a gig. Do the math for a four-member band and you'll realize that the biggest reason bands play at festivals and gigs is for the love of music.

The money comes from Hindi film sessions, corporate shows and in singer Suman Sridhar's case: weddings. One of the finest vocalists in the country, Sridhar tells us that playing at destination weddings have been paying all her bills, and even funding her solo album in the making. Says Nirmika Singh, a freelance writer based in Mumbai who also fronts her band, Nirmika and the Few Good Men, "It's easier to get a gig at a car opening than a Blue Frog, and they're completely different ball games." Singh, who moved from New Delhi to Mumbai in 2011, plays a mix of originals and covers at her shows. The covers, of course, are a game changer when it comes to being booked for more gigs, she adds. "If you manage your indie credentials with cover bands, nothing like it. If I do music full time, I'd be very happy, but I like to manage my writing with my singing. I like to be a little miserable." While Singh says it was "extremely difficult" for her to manage a full time job of a journalist at daily newspaper Hindustan Times and the band, she eventually found a balance and is now recording her first EP, due later this year.

"In India, people don't appreciate live music." — Nikhil Barua, The Humming Tree

TOUGH LUCK Delhi's Prateek Kuhad had a nest fund and parental support to sustain a full time career as a musician



The economic logic of being a full time musician is completely skewed. Delhi-based singer and songwriter Prateek Kuhad, who is the buzzed-about artist of 2015 agrees. Kuhad worked as a research associate at an economic consulting firm in New York for six months, soon after he finished college in 2012. After he released his first EP, Raat Raazi in 2013, he survived on savings from his NYC job. Kuhad adds, "Once those reserves got over and since then it's been a combination of what I earn through gigs and financial help from my parents when I need it. Being privileged helps, there's no two ways about that. That I don't have to worry about where my next meal is coming from or about rent, gives me the opportunity to spend more time to work on my craft."

Unfortunately, a lot of Indian musicians struggle to strike that balance between financial independence and a career in music. Mumbai-based Arjun Tandon, 24, was a part of Mumbai alt rock band Spud In The Box, but gave up music to pursue a full time job as a research analyst in a hedge fund firm. Although there was parental support – something Tandon says all band members in

Spud have received – being a musician meant forsaking financial freedom. Tandon, who was a guitarist with Spud In The Box during their early years, adds, "Fortunately or unfortunately, there aren't enough people that understand the kind of music they [Spud in The Box] are making out there. It still is difficult for them, I'd say."

There have been several others such as Tandon who have given up on a full time career in music. In 2006, vocalist and songwriter Sujit Kumar was broke for the umpteenth time and living in his car. It was more than a decade ago, in 1994 that a 16-year-old Kumar dreamt of setting up his own band. Kumar formed Tantrix, a rock band based in Mumbai, and

lived up to the "struggling artist" stereotype. Shunned by his family for preferring music over studies, Kumar went through several jobs ranging from event manager to roadside book seller. He says, "Getting into music instead of concentrating on my studies was the last straw for my family. They threw me out of the house." Kumar moved to Virginia in 2013.

The lack of an audience inclined to buy music or tickets to a show and a shortage of venues across the country that support bands or venues that actually pay well also make it tough for alternative musicians to sustain themselves. Of course, there are exceptions. Bengaluru venue The Humming Tree has maintained a free entry policy for its guests since it was set up in 2013, but has ensured that the bands who perform are well compensated. The Humming Tree founder Nikhil Barua said in a previous interview, "Unfortunately in India, people don't appreciate live music. So it's almost like a social cause right now, where we say, 'Ok, we'll take a hit. You come and you understand what good live music is.' Ideally artists should be paid. We pay them regardless of whether we charge an entry or not."

Meanwhile, Kumar continues to record with Mumbai hard rock band Overhung from Virginia, where he is part of several bands since 2013 – from hard rock band The Derty Basterds to his alt-metal/rock group Sabki-maaki. Even out in the U.S.'s crowded alternative scene, it's tougher, but the avenues are easier, according to Kumar. Says the vocalist, "I was really scared at first when I moved. My wife has a job here, but I wondered if I would get into a band – the levels [for musicians] are so high here." It's never as glamorous and rewarding as Bollywood has made it out to be in films like *Rockstar*, but Kumar says. "My policy is to just be honest and stick to my guns. You'll probably never 'make it', but you'll be happy."

ANURAG TAGAT

Brandon Flowers, the Solo Killer

On his new album, why he's still not a Kanye fan, and wanting to conquer the world

THE KILLERS HAVE BEEN LAYING low since they wrapped a big tour last summer – which doesn't necessarily sit well with frontman Brandon Flowers. "A couple of the guys want to take a break from touring and the rat race," the singer, 33, told *ROLLING STONE*. "I want to keep it going." So Flowers decided he would record a new solo album, *The Desired Effect* (out May 19th), a collection of spare, synth-y pop songs he cut with producer Ariel Rechtshaid (Haim, Vampire Weekend). We caught up with Flowers as he prepares for a solo tour of Europe.

It sounds like you picked up some cues from Lorde on this record. Are you a fan?

Yeah. There's something really bold about how bare her songs are. That sort of minimalism is a good route – but if you're going to strip it down like that, the song better be really good.

What goes through your head when you listen to the radio today?

You hear a lot of blending of different genres, and that's great. But the bands that were around when the Killers first came out 10 years ago – the Strokes, Franz Ferdinand, Interpol – all had a strong identity. I don't hear that as much, I guess.

I read an essay calling the Killers' second album, "Sam's Town," one of the most misunderstood albums of the decade.



IN BLOOM "He would have been a great president," Flowers says of Mitt Romney.

It took a beating, starting with *ROLLING STONE*. But I got thicker skin because of it.

Before it came out, you called it "one of the best albums in the past 20 years."

I can still see it: I was standing in my driveway in Henderson, Nevada, doing an interview, and I remember those words coming out of my mouth. I didn't know it was going to be so controversial. I was just excit-

ed! And it ended up backfiring. I put my foot in my mouth quite a bit in the early days.

Like in 2006, when you said Kanye "makes me ill"?

That one's tough. Everyone's afraid to say anything contrary to him being a genius. It's crazy, man! I'm not going to tear him down, but I will say I find that to be frustrating [laughs]. A lot of people might agree with me now. I may have been a little bit ahead of my time.

You had lunch with Mitt Romney, a fellow Mormon, during his campaign, right?

Yeah. You know, he was a nice guy. I think he would have been a great president.

Between solo dates, you're playing a few shows with the Killers this summer.

Ten years after our first album, there are more people than ever at our shows. I can't

wait for the next Killers record and to go do it again.

There has been speculation for years that you guys are breaking up.

I get it. It's this big machine now. We need to find a way to get a bit of the hunger we had earlier on, and not just look at it as an opportunity to make money. I want us to get back to that place of being a band, people that want to get together and take on the world. That's what comes to mind when I think of INXS or U2 or the Stones.

PATRICK DOYLE

MEMOIR

JOHNNY ROTTEN'S GOLDEN YEARS



Lydon

It turns out that the guy who once sang "Fuck this/And fuck that/Fuck it all" has a softer side. *Anger Is an Energy: My Life Uncensored*, the new memoir from former Sex Pistols and PiL frontman John Lydon, is a hilarious and at times touching account of everything from growing up in a "piss-poor" London neighborhood to helping raise his wife's grandchildren. Lydon does as much praising as bomb-throwing – including some kind words for

Mick Jagger, who helped Sex Pistols bassist Sid Vicious get a lawyer when he was accused of murdering Nancy Spungen. "I have a great deal of respect for Mr. Jagger for that," Lydon, 59, tells *ROLLING STONE*.

The singer gets candid, talking about trying heroin (once was enough) and how deeply his

father's death affected him. "All these fucks can run around with their punk agendas, but they don't understand what humanity is," he writes. "My idea of punk is humanity."

Writing the book, says Lydon, "I learned how short life is and you best cram in as much as you possibly can. I'm doing things to the best of my disabilities. I have a humor about it. There's no self-pity."

KORY GROW



Bill Graham's Rock & Roll Life Goes on Display in L.A.

A new exhibition celebrates the work of the pioneering promoter and impresario

BILL GRAHAM WAS THE MOST INFLUENTIAL concert promoter in rock history, a music-biz visionary with a legendary take-no-prisoners style. "When Bill said he'd take care of it, it was taken care of," said Keith Richards. "Whether you liked it or not." Now his three decades of work are on display in "Bill Graham and the Rock & Roll Revolution," a collection of personal artifacts and memorabilia at the Skirball Cultural Center in Los Angeles.

"Bill's art was the performances and the acts that he booked," says exhibit curator Erin Clancey. Graham started in San Fran-

cisco (where his Fillmore West served as home court for bands like the Grateful Dead) and moved on to organize tours with the Rolling Stones, as well as Live Aid in 1985, before dying in a helicopter crash in 1991. The exhibition, which travels to San Francisco next year and the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame in 2017, includes artifacts like Jerry Garcia's custom "Wolf" guitar, the belt worn by Mick Jagger at Altamont and a handbill from the first event Graham brought to the Fillmore: a benefit for the satirical theater group the San Francisco Mime Troupe. It also touches on Graham's childhood as a German Jewish refugee who fled the Nazis. Says Clancey, "He was an immigrant who took risks and did great things in American society."



Darnielle

STEVE APPLEFORD



BRINGING OUT THE DEAD The Father Time costume (left) Graham wore at a Grateful Dead gig on New Year's Eve. Above: Garcia's custom "Wolf" guitar.

The Supersonics Call It Quits

The Kolkata rock band was working on a third new album

FAR FROM THE BAND RACE
The Supersonics split up again



THE SUPERSONICS FROM KOLKATA have been no strangers to rumors of another hiatus since their big disbandment back in 2010. At the time, the quartet were riding high on the success of their impressive debut, *Maby Baking* and had just returned to India from a short UK tour, which includ-

ed a stop at the Great Escape Festival. Since regrouping in 2012, the band have been actively gigging across the country and released a mature, well-received second album in *Heads Up*, produced by studio whiz Miti Adhikari upon his return to India.

The group played two shows in Delhi and at the Kasauli Rhythm and Blues Festival over the first weekend of April. Both shows were abuzz with rumors of a split in the band again. While band members refuse to confirm any such development, there's a definite break within the band that led to the rumors.

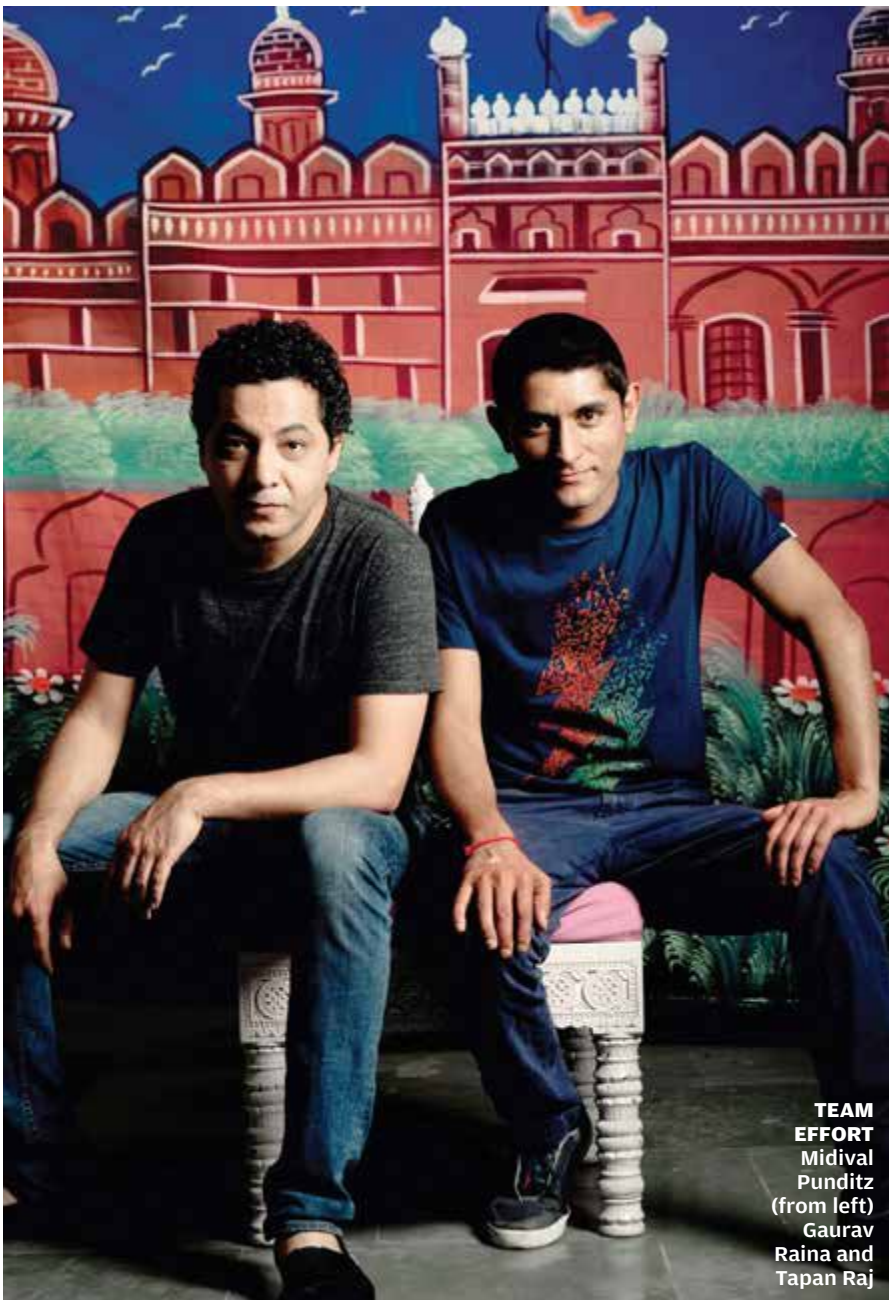
Frontman Ananda Sen, who was previously working on a solo album with Vivek Nair of the Mumbai band, The Mayvns, has finally put together a band to work on more material. Members of Sen's new group comprise Avinash Chordia of The Supersonics on drums, Nicholas Rixon and Subhodip Banerjee of Ifs and Buts on backing vocals and guitar respectively, and Roheet Mukherjee of Ganesh Talkies on bass duties. Sen confirms, "The plan was always to do my own thing, and I have way too much material, not all of which might convert into songs with The Supersonics. This (project) has been

a long time coming, and we're working towards an album to be released this year for sure, and enough songs for a club gig and festival slots."

Rohan Ganguli, guitar player of The Supersonics has also been responsible for putting together the fairly active Big Family Blues Ensemble in Kolkata, alongside a newly launched project titled Cube Root with drummer Dwaipayaan Saha (who did percussions and backing vocals on both the Supersonics albums) and Tirthankar Ray on bass. Ganguli says, "With the Big Family Blues Ensemble, we're done tracking seven songs in studio, and the album should be done soon - and then, we're onto the Cube Root album." Bassist Nitin Mani on the other hand has always been fairly busy, playing with local comedy rock act Bandage.

The Supersonics began work on a third album, which is currently on hold. Both Sen and Ganguli say that they've both been busy working on new material with different bands, but have definitely ruled out that the band is splitting. Perhaps being in a band does involve more compromises than one can imagine, and 10 years is a long time to be in one.

NAMAN SARAIYA



TEAM EFFORT
Midival Punditz (from left) Gaurav Raina and Tapan Raj

Seeking The Light

Delhi-based electronica duo Midival Punditz plan to take the performance-based concept album to stage

ASK MIDIVAL'S PUNDITZ'S TAPAN Raj what the secret to his two-decade-long musical alliance with Gaurav Raina is, and he corrects me first. "We've been together for three de-

acades actually." School days don't go uncounted, he tells me that their successful partnership has stood the test of time not only because of the synergy they share, but also because "we've allowed ourselves to do things outside of this partnership."

The latest album by this Delhi-based duo – known for its unique brand of electronica-meets-Indian folk – attests to the two tenets

Raj spells out. Although it is their first release in six years (their last, *Hello Hello*, was out in 2009), which is a long wait by electronica standards, *Light* has been crafted with care to fit into the continuum of their identifiable sound.

It features nine tracks and multiple collaborations with renowned names. Says Raj, "When we were writing, we were thinking how it'll be presented on stage. We kept in mind the build-ups and the breakdowns, and even things like how the light will drop." The duo had planned it all until the last detail including how the spotlight would focus on every collaborator who would be part of their show.

Light is one such album that is brought alive by the guest artists on it. Vocalists Papon and Malini Awasthi bring their familiar folk sound to the plaintive "Nadia", while Kutle Khan sprinkles a bit of his Manganiyar magic on "Baanwarey" and "Echoes." Veteran flautist Pandit Ajay Prasanna is also a favourite with the duo; he is heard on five tracks. Raina and American vocalist Todd Michaelsen share vocal duties on "Don't let go". Says Raina, "This song is special to us; it is an emotional, yet happy track we wrote and dedicated to a friend who had passed away." In "Rushing", ex Motherjane guitarist Baiju Dharmajan makes his Carnatic-rock contribution.

The writing process was spread across almost two years. Raj recounts, "We recorded the album over two years. There were times when we wrote two songs in one week, and then times when weeks passed without any writing." Raj and Raina had around 20 songs from which they chose the final nine. "We wanted this album to sound different from anything we've done before," says Raj. Adds Raina, "You know when to indulge and push and when not to. Luckily, we're not in a nine-to-five job so when things get a little stressful, we take it easy."

While they were working on *Light*, the duo also pursued their individual projects. In 2014, Raina released a solo album titled *Grey To Silver* in his new avatar as GRAIN, and Raj launched his technology company. The duo also began work on the soundtrack of Hindi films such as *Dum Maaro Dum* (2011), and *Karthik Calling Karthik* (2010). "It was when the music festival boom happened when we realized that it was time to write again," confides Raina.

Midival Punditz are signed to the American label Six Degrees Records, which also represents producer and percussionist Karsh Kale, Italian dub icon Gaudi, American sufi-fusion outfit Lal Meri, among other artists from across the globe. They recently wrapped up a four-city pre-album release tour and are planning another tour soon.

"When we were writing, we were thinking how it'll be presented on stage." — Tapan Raj

NIRMIKA SINGH

COURTESY OF THE ARTIST

Florence Welch

The Florence and the Machine singer on her new LP, stripping down at Coachella, and fooling Neil Young By Patrick Doyle

IHAD TO FALL APART A BIT," SAYS Florence Welch of *How Big How Blue How Beautiful*, the first Florence and the Machine album in four years. In the period leading up to the album, Welch, 28, endured a rough breakup with her boyfriend and was partying too much. Not only did Welch translate her hard times into her most emotionally intense album yet, she also quit drinking during the sessions. "I had quite a monkish existence," she says. "I cycled to the studio, cycled home, read, ate, went to bed. It was like convalescing. But it really was magic."

You played a killer set at Coachella, and also broke your foot. What happened?

Well, I told everyone in the crowd to take their clothes off. We'd been doing that at our shows, and my guitarist had been giving me shit for not taking off *my* clothes. So I was like, "Fuck it, I've got to do it!" and started taking off my shirt. Then I was like, "I've got to get down [into the crowd], with everyone else who's getting naked." I just did a particularly hard, fast jump offstage, and I was just like, "Fuck!" I managed to jump back on the stage, and that's where my security guard found me, collapsed behind a speaker in a bra.

A lot of the songs on the new album are about being in a relationship with someone who is driving you away.

I had to experience it. I wouldn't wish it on someone, but when you make something out of it, that's what it was all for, I guess. The songs become these talismans, little spells that you've written that are just for yourself. And you can carry them with you.

You took a year off before making the new record. What did you do?

It was supposed to be a really nice time. Instead I got involved in this really confusing thing. I was trying to figure out what would make me happy: Was it partying? Was it a relationship? The break meant I had to face a lot of my own demons.



Was your drinking one of those demons you had to face?

Definitely. When you're on tour, it's catered for that. You can move on to the next city and the next hotel, and as long as the shows are good, it's fine. But you can't take that attitude into your own life. When you're trying to live and love in a nonscheduled situation, you're just like, "Oh, shit, I just keep fucking up. What am I doing?"

What do you mean by "fucking up"?

Like ending up on *MTV News* drunk. There was a big party at my house one night. I got really drunk, and we moved to the tiki bar that's 'round the corner. I hadn't performed in ages, and there's a house band there playing, and my friends are tossing me shots, so I went up onstage. Two days later, I get a phone call from my manager. Someone had filmed me singing and screaming and taking shots. And it ended up on *MTV News*. I was like, "Oh, shit."

You're known for your wild outfits. Is it hard to keep coming up with new ones?

Right now, it's been about simplifying. I think if you wear something, it kind of dictates how you perform. And so I think I wanted to make sure I felt as free as possible in the moment. I looked at Nick Cave, how he would just walk onstage in a suit. We've been looking at moving away from costumes. I like the idea of breaking down the boundaries between my real self and my stage self – to be as raw as possible.

You used to try to communicate with spirits when you were younger, right?

Well, I was always sneaking into graveyards when I was younger. There's something invigorating about being so close to death. And when I was 17, a little boy wandered out of the bushes at my grandmother's funeral. I was like, "I'm going to pretend that I'm a ghost." We had a matter-of-fact little chat before he walked back into the bushes. Then, I thought, "Shit, where did that boy come from? Maybe *he* was a ghost."

You performed at Neil Young's Bridge School Benefit last year. Did you get to meet Neil?

Yeah. He's got such incredible energy. He said that when he first heard my record, he thought that I was a man with a high voice [laughs]. He was like, "I live in the mountains. I don't know much media. I just thought you were a man called Florence. And I was like, 'Hey, that's pretty punk.'" I was like, "Thanks, Neil. Thank you so much."

A silhouette of a rock climber in a black wetsuit and helmet, climbing a vertical rock face on the left side of the image. The climber is positioned vertically, with one arm reaching up and legs braced against the rock. The background is a dramatic sky with golden-yellow clouds, suggesting a sunrise or sunset.

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Hell's Ambassadors

Austrian death metal band Belphegor's frontman Helmuth Lehner on how beating a serious illness inspired their recent album 'Conjuring The Dead' and their India debut at Bangalore Open Air

IN BLOOD

(from left) Helmuth and Serpenth from Belphegor.



DEATH METALLERS Belphegor's frontman and founding member Helmuth Lehner doesn't prefer the term fans, choosing to call them soldiers and supporters instead. Nor does he refer to his band's shows as gigs. Says Lehner from Salzburg, "It is more like an insane ritual. You will see it and hear it in June, and understand what it is all about." Lehner and Belphegor, who started out playing blackened death metal in 1993, are talking about the latest in a long list of countries they can cross off a world map – their debut

India show at the fourth edition of metal festival Bangalore Open Air on June 6th.

Lehner doesn't add that they're bringing their stage props for the "insane ritual," which usually includes mangled goat heads and a gas mask, but talks with the enthusiasm of a young metalhead, even though he'll hit half a century soon [He's 46]. He says that Belphegor can't wait to "death-blast our tracks to the Indian audience with utmost brutality." For their Bangalore Open Air set, the band "will shred all the impor-

tant tracks such as 'Conjuring The Dead,' 'Lucifer Incestus,' 'Black Winged Torment,' 'Gasmask Terror,' and more."

About four years ago, age was catching up with Lehner, who had a serious bout of typhoid and lung infection, which required a life-saving operation in 2011 that left him unable to perform or write music for an entire year. But he becomes his characteristic self again and quotes their 2011 song "Rise To Fall and Fall To Rise," adding with a laugh, "But I don't pray to any god for giving me a second chance. What the fuck, ever. The high standards for medicine in Austria and well-trained doctors saved my life." After fully recovering, Lehner did realize that he can no longer continue living what he jokingly referred to in his previous interviews as "fast exciting suicidal lifestyle." Says Lehner, "I had to slow down. Yes, the suicidal lifestyle is gone. I celebrated it [for] 20 years... [it's] probably enough. I wonder how I'm still here."

His illness and recovery influenced their next album, *Conjuring The Dead*, which released in 2014 on Nuclear Blast Records. The band celebrates diabolical death metal, with a nod toward the melody and pace of New Wave of British Heavy Metal, pioneered by the likes of Iron Maiden and Judas Priest. Lehner adds, "My health issues and recovery did affect everything regarding the new album, the band, my life. That's why the songs on *Conjuring The Dead* sound way more brutal, edgy and raw. We concentrated on sick death brutality with obscure melodies." Recorded in Florida with heavy metal producer Erik Rutan, who has worked with death metal's greats, including Nile and Cannibal Corpse.

And like Cannibal Corpse and their death metal ilk, Lehner admits that they have faced a bit of backlash for their controversial graphic, gory artwork for their first three albums *Blutsabbath* [1997], *The Last Supper* [1995] and *Necrodaemon Terrorsathan* [2000]. He cryptically says, "An honor – this horror." But he adds more seriously, "You have to deal with that shit as a band and as a person. I don't waste

much time to thinking about things like that, I never did." But they're still taking their music across the world, touring Japan and China in May and previous travels including South Africa, Brazil and the U.S. Lehner says enthusiastically that the goal for them is to not do it for themselves, but

for their supporters. Says Lehner, "It's all about the demons who visit our shows and celebrate extreme metal music with us. There are many places around the world where the metal spirit is strong and will exist forever."

ANURAG TAGAT

"I had to slow down. Yes, the suicidal lifestyle is gone." – Lehner.

COURTESY OF THE ARTIST.

Luke Kenny

Actor, vocalist and keyboard player Luke Kenny on his personal style and love for accessories

If he were hosting a Michael Jackson tribute night, Luke Kenny will pull out a silver glove to go with the rest of his look for the evening and if it is a straight up rock show, you'd be sure that he'll have just the right leather jacket for the stage. Kenny, who has worn several hats – he's been a VJ, a DJ, is a programming head of a music channel and is a performing artist – has an enviable collection of them in his wardrobe. This month, he tells us who he regards as his fashion icons and why he loves jewelry as much as other accessories.

What would you describe your personal style as?

Comfort is the biggest deciding factor for me when it comes to putting together an outfit or a look. I don't have any particular formula. I usually go with what I'm most comfortable in. That usually includes t-shirts with an edge of fun, a good pair of jeans and sneakers. I'm not a big fan of trousers, though, so it's almost always denims.

Are you conscious of what you wear while performing?

Definitely. I try to put together my outfit keeping in mind a few things such as the venue, the crowd, and of course, the kind of music I will be performing. For example, if it's a large venue with a big stage, I prefer to go with something a little more 'flashy' as opposed to when it's a smaller venue, where I might tone it down a bit. But I do consciously add a few accessories, perhaps a scarf, or some unique shoes. On the other hand, if it's a tribute gig, then I try to replicate the artist as closely as possible.

What does your wardrobe look like?

My wardrobe consists mostly of comfortable t-shirts and slim fitting jeans. I'm a t-shirt monster, really, and I like to go for the ones that have pop culture prints, or my favorite bands and artists. I'm also a huge fan of corduroys. I don't wear shirts or kurtas too often, unless the situation requires it.

What do you feel is the essence of a man's style, especially for musicians?

I think in general, a man's style should be reflective of his personality, and what he is

PLATINUM
CUFFLINKS
AND RINGS BY
P.N.GADGIL;
PLATINUM
BRACELET BY TBZ
- THE ORIGINAL



Pleated band
collar tuxedo
white shirt
by Zara

most comfortable in. A man's style evolves with time and with what he is exposed to. In the case of musicians, their look should be reflective of the music they are playing; if they were doing, say, a Doors tribute, then they should maybe come as close to Morrison's look as possible. If they're performing their own music, then of course, they should be original and follow their own style.

Do you have any style icons?

On-stage, I like to draw inspiration from one of the greatest performers, Michael Jackson. Although it was Elvis Presley who evolved stage costumes with his signature black leather outfits, followed by the white cape in the Seventies, MJ truly took it to another level with accessories like the glove and the shiny shoes.

When I'm not performing, I like to keep it simple, with tees, well-fitting jeans and usually a pair of Converse.

What is your take on men's jewelry? What kind of accessories do you wear at gigs or on a regular basis?

Men wearing jewelry can be sexy if it not too overbearing. And if we are to go by the pictures of males in Indian mythology then men wearing jewelry is an ancient tradition. I have always been fond of bracelets and rings etc. At one point in time, I used to wear rings on all my ten digits. Add to that both wrists full of bracelets, metal as well as non-metal. While some of that ostentatious sense of accessorizing has waned, the urge to go full metal does make its appearance once in a while.



Grey pullover by
Jack & Jones; Black
zipper jacket by Zara

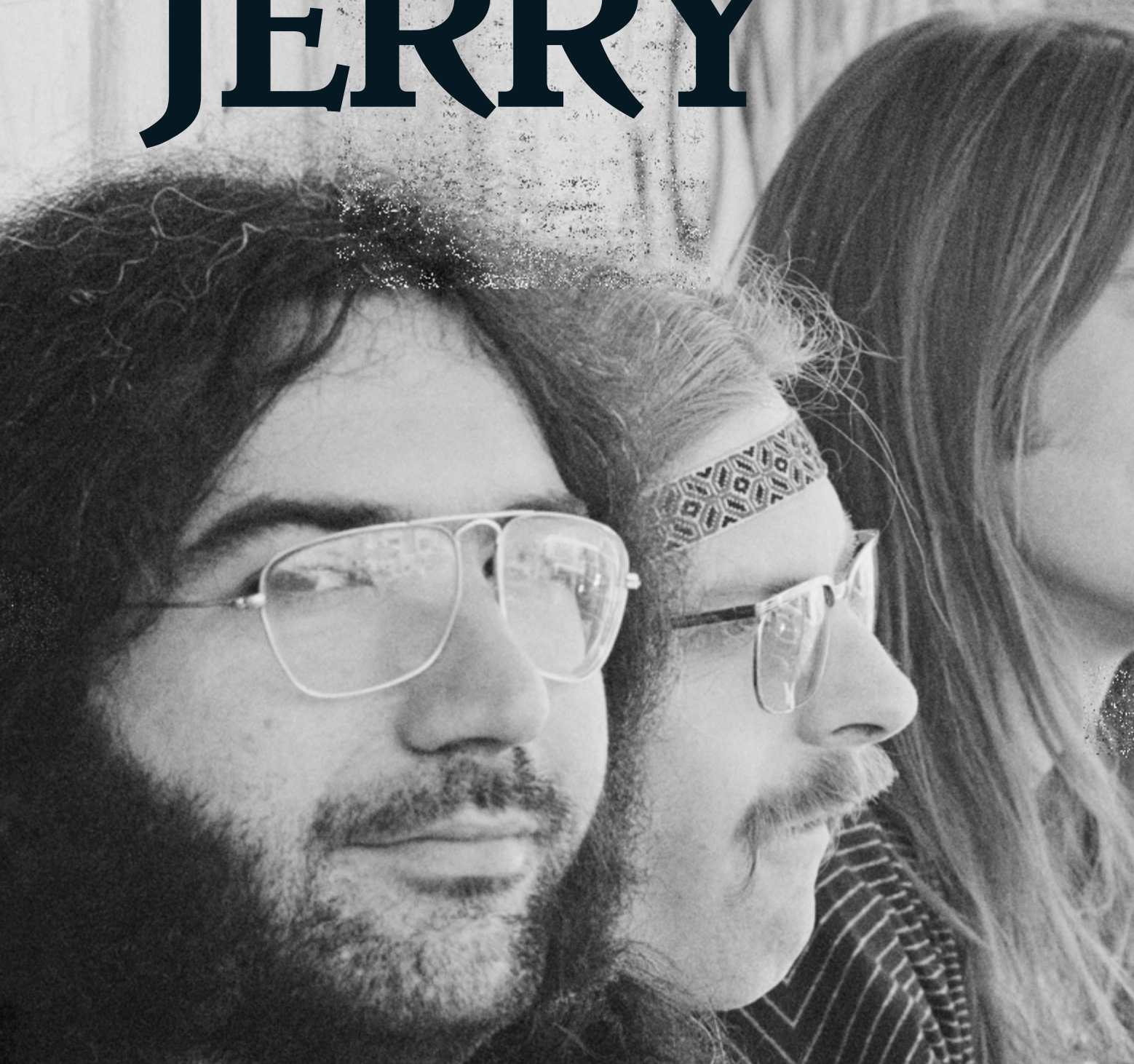
PLATINUM
RINGS BY
P.N. GADGIL;
PLATINUM
BRACELETS
AND CHAIN BY
MALABAR GOLD
& DIAMONDS

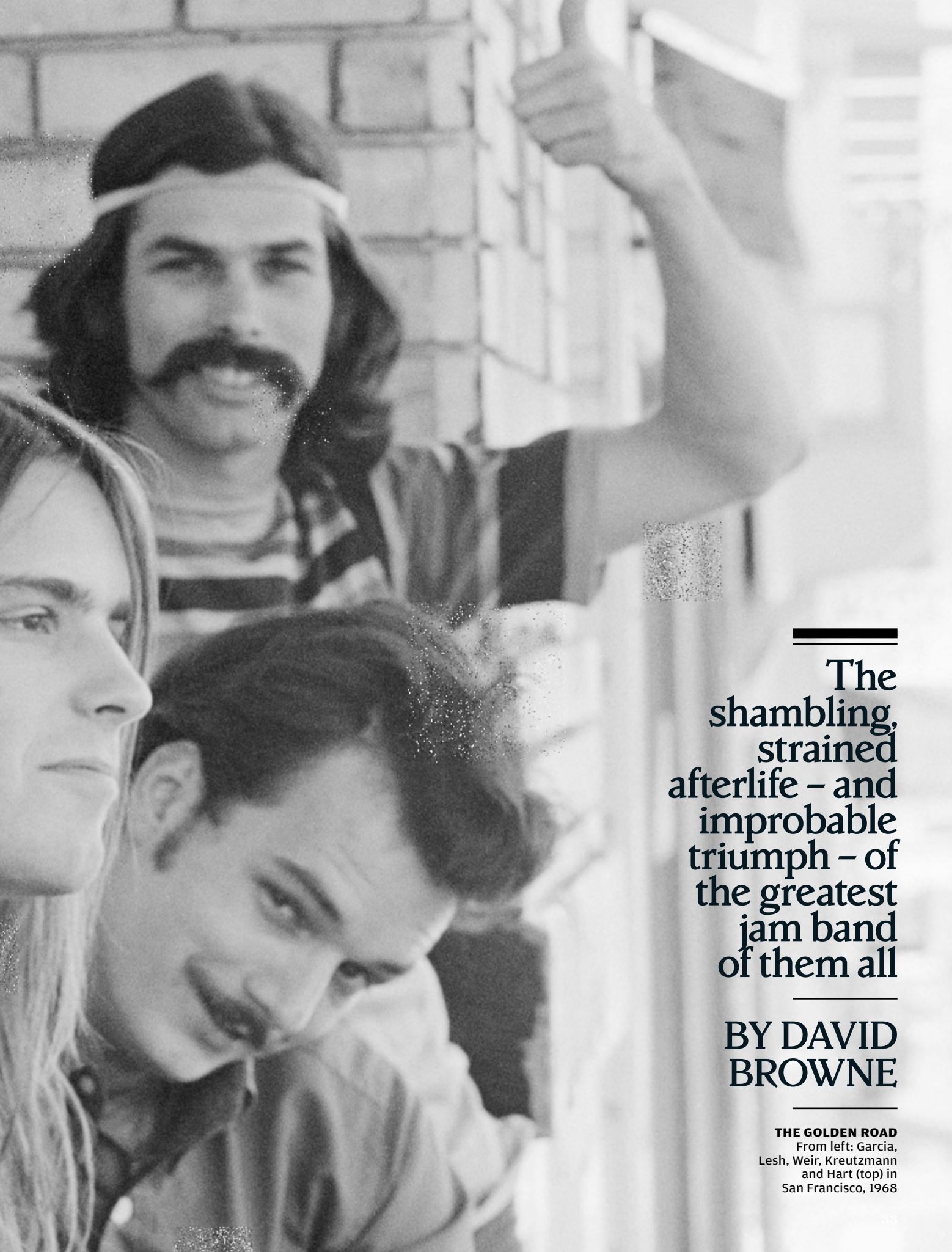
Denim jacket by
Calvin Klein; Black
t-shirt by Kenneth
Cole; Jeans by GAS



PLATINUM
BRACELET AND
CHAINS BY
JOYALUKKAS;
PLATINUM
RING BY
P.N. GADGIL

THE
DEAD
AFTER
JERRY





The
shambling,
strained
afterlife – and
improbable
triumph – of
the greatest
jam band
of them all

BY DAVID
BROWNE

THE GOLDEN ROAD

From left: Garcia,
Lesh, Weir, Kreutzmann
and Hart (top) in
San Francisco, 1968

SOMEONE HAD TO MAKE THE CALL, AND AS IT often did, it fell to Jerry Garcia. It was July 1995, and the Grateful Dead were about to play the Deer Creek Music Center, outside Indianapolis, when an anonymous caller phoned the venue with a message: He was going to kill the Dead's iconic frontman. The caller had concluded that his daughter had run off with someone associated with the Dead and he was planning to take Garcia out during the show to exact revenge. It was bad enough that Garcia was struggling with health and drug issues. Now this? ♦ As the Dead huddled backstage with security and local police, no one knew how seriously to take the threat. Drummer Mickey Hart joked about it with Garcia; fearing for his safety, bassist Phil Lesh announced he had already packed his bags and was going back to the Bay Area with his family, who had joined him on the road. But the last word was Garcia's. Dismissing

the threat, he told the band the show was on. Lesh and everyone else had no choice but to go along.

One month later, on August 9th, Garcia would be gone. After checking himself first into the Betty Ford Center for his heroin addiction, and then into Serenity Knolls, a woodsy retreat in Marin County, he was found dead in his room by a nurse, and his death was ruled a heart attack due to two severely clogged arteries. "He was being aggressive about cleaning up," guitarist Bob Weir told Rolling Stone in 2013, "and his body just couldn't handle it."

The band had already been through more than its share of crises: busts, business debacles, deaths in the family (keyboardists Ron "Pigpen" McKernan, Keith Godchaux and Brent Mydland). But with Garcia's passing, the Dead would lose the closest thing to a leader that the often dysfunctional organization could bear. Never one to strong-arm his bandmates, Garcia would often let his wishes be known subtly, allowing everyone else to speak first in band meetings before weighing in himself. As Lesh told RS last year, "A lot of times he would lead by omission. Everybody would have an idea and he wouldn't like any of them. It was like, 'We're not going any of those ways. So figure it out.' It was anti-leadership."

Garcia's absence has defined the band ever since, as various combinations of the original members have come together – and come apart – in attempts to preserve the Grateful Dead's singular legacy. The result has been two decades of solo careers, offshoot bands, temporary retirements, full or partial reunions onstage and on tour, and occasional public squabbling, as dejected or puzzled Deadheads watched and tried to

comprehend what was happening with their cherished band. "Jerry's death removed the center," Lesh has said. "The bond wasn't as strong without him."

The bond will be restored in late June, when Weir, Lesh, Hart and drummer Bill Kreutzmann will reunite for Fare Thee Well: five shows – two in Santa Clara, California, and three in Chicago, with Trey Anastasio of Phish standing in as singer-guitarist – that will celebrate the 50th anniversary of one of rock's most enduring institutions. The performances, some of which will also be shown in movie theaters around the country as well as streamed online and broadcast on pay-per-view, are among the most anticipated concerts of the year.

Arriving at this point was no easy task.



After Garcia's death, the band was "tired of being together," says a manager. "But I said, 'You have a company here.'"

Decades of tangled, often fraught relationships had to be managed, most delicately in the selection of the person who would be playing Garcia's parts onstage. The band is calling the shows its "final stand" – the last time the public will be able to see the four play together, and the end of a sometimes strained, haphazard chapter in the life of the Dead.

IN THE IMMEDIATE AFTERMATH of Garcia's death, various ideas were floated for a post-Jerry tour: Carlos Santana and Los Lobos' David Hidalgo were rumored as possible temporary replacements. At a meeting that December, Lesh and Kreutzmann retired from the road, and the name "Grateful Dead" was shelved as a touring entity. Grateful Dead Productions, the band's company, which employed 40-something staffers, took a predictable financial hit, despite the flood of merchandise orders from mourning Deadheads. Around 15 people were laid off – including members of the Dead's road crew – and others would face salary reductions. The band members "were kind of tired of being together," says their former business manager Tim Jorstad. "I was looking at them and saying, 'You have a company here, with merchandise and a record company – that's a real, live business that will carry on whether you guys release new music or not.'"

Kreutzmann wrestled with pills and alcohol abuse. "I was lost in every direction," he told RS in 2012. "I didn't know what to do." Hart formed a number of world-music-oriented bands, including Mystery Box. Weir's side project RatDog became his main gig – one that pointedly downplayed Dead songs in favor of blues, R&B and Bob Dylan covers. As Lesh told RS last year, "The Grateful Dead are not good mourners. Most of the time, the preferred response is to turn it into a joke. Me and Mickey at Jerry's coffin: 'Hey, he looks pretty good for a dead guy.' But nobody wants to go into the 'boo-hoo' mode."

Three years later, in 1998, Lesh, Weir and Hart joined together in a new band, dubbed the Other Ones in honor of the groundbreaking psychedelic suite on the Dead's *Anthem of the Sun*. Pianist Bruce Hornsby, who'd been a touring member of the Dead between 1990 and 1992, was part of the new band. Hornsby had left the Dead over his frustration with Garcia's increasingly erratic playing. But as the Other Ones began preparing for their summer tour, he saw the difference right away: Thanks to Lesh, the band was rehearsing more than usual, and with positive results. "The word got out that this was really good," says Hornsby. "Deadheads were a discerning audience in that way. They knew good Dead and not-so-good Dead. It was so fresh."



Even when Garcia was alive, the personal dynamics within the Dead were complicated. Garcia could be both affable and demanding; Lesh was fastidious, especially when it came to their music and sound systems. Hart was the proactive, thousand-ideas-a-minute force of nature. Weir – who was all of 17 when the Dead played their first shows – was the perennial kid, still sometimes teased by his older bandmates, even after decades. Kreutzmann was the band's mercurial badass. They could be hard on one another: In August 1968, at a group meeting, the young Weir was told by Lesh and Garcia that he needed to improve his guitar playing, with the implied threat that he would be kicked out if he didn't.

New challenges created new divisions. In the late 1990s, Weir, Hart and Kreutzmann supported a plan to license their recordings and concert footage to a company funded by private investors. Lesh opposed the idea ("In essence, we were gambling with our legacy," he would write in his memoir, *Searching for the Sound*) but was outvoted – despite the Dead's tradition that big decisions could be vetoed by one member. Before matters grew too ugly, the dot-com crash put an end to the plans, but the damage had been done.

This was evident on nights such as December 31st, 2000, when Deadheads were presented with two different, opposing offshoots – a version of the Other Ones with Hart, Weir and Kreutzmann, and Lesh's Phil Lesh and Friends – both playing the same night in the Bay Area. By then, Lesh and Friends, a rotating ensemble that included at various times guitarists Warren

Terrapin Revisited
 "Jerry's death removed the center," Lesh (pictured) has said. "The bond wasn't as strong without him."

Haynes and Derek Trucks and Little Feat keyboardist Bill Payne, had become the must-see of the post-Dead projects. "Promoters would call and say, 'I thought the Dead was Bobby and Jerry' – because they were the vocalists and guitarists – and 'Why is Phil selling 10 times what Bobby is selling?'" says a source in the Dead camp. "I said, 'Phil is the other great instrumentalist in the Dead, and that's what Deadheads care about.' And Phil and Friends were playing the repertoire."

In 2003 and 2004, they all came together to tour under the name the Dead. Tensions soon arose over who would call the musical shots. "It was a little bit of chaos that we went through," Weir told *Rolling Stone* of this period. "There were some misunderstandings." Added Kreutzmann, "It was kind of rough. I can't be in a band when people are fighting with each other and having a hard time."

Questions over how to manage the band's legacy in the digital age emerged. Since the Nineties, Deadheads had begun uploading fan-recorded concert tapes to the Live Music Archive, a San Francisco website, making virtually every show the band had ever played available for free. But now, the band that had fostered this taper culture wasn't playing stadiums anymore, and it needed revenue. "The

Dead were caught in a difficult place," said a source close to the group. "The market ethic of the band was always to give performances away. It worked as long as there were infinite shows. When Jerry died, all that music became their financial future. So now it was 'Maybe we can't give this away.'"

In 2005, the Dead ordered the tapes pulled down. Lesh openly defied the decision, saying in a statement that he hadn't been told of the plan. After an online petition was circulated by angry fans, the Dead organization came up with a compromise, allowing audience tapes to be available for free download – but not the band's higher-quality soundboard tapes, which would only be available for streaming. "You go through 30 years together, you have ups and downs," Lesh told *RS* last year. "I love my brothers. But just like in any family, you don't always agree with what they do."

Tensions eased the following year when the group signed a lucrative deal with Rhino Entertainment, which gave each man a guaranteed yearly income for a decade, no matter how many CDs or downloads were sold. The Dead reunited to play a Barack Obama benefit in October 2008. Inspired by that show, and with the backing of Live Nation, the band returned to the road in the spring of 2009. "We've all been bandleaders now," Weir said at the time, "so it's easier to be an Indian and not a chief. That's a real positive element."

But after a strong beginning, the tour ended on a less-than-friendly note a month later, with lingering resentments and money matters coming between them, accord-

ing to various sources. Backstage at one show, Hart looked over a long set list that he thought the meticulous Lesh had prepared, and cracked, “Yeah, that’s not going to happen. This is nuts. Phil’s dreaming if he thinks we can play that.” In his memoir, *Deal*, Kreutzmann says the tour “spelled the end of the Dead” thanks to “head trips...so monstrous and so big.” Said Hart to Rolling Stone, “There were a lot of personal and musical issues.” According to one source, Weir still felt as if he were being treated as the “little brother.” It was as if the band dynamic was frozen in time.

Lesh and Weir, however, reconnected. “Phil and I rediscovered each other on the Dead tour,” Weir said. Over dinner with their wives soon after, Lesh and Weir discussed joining forces to form a band of their own, which came to be called Furthur, after Ken Kesey’s famous Merry Pranksters bus. They recruited guitarist John Kadlecik, who played and sang Garcia’s parts in the much-loved Dead cover band Dark Star Orchestra. “There were musical directions Phil and I were sort of boldly pursuing,” added Weir, “and I’m not entirely sure the other guys heard it.”

Lesh embraced Kadlecik, who had grown up in the Midwest and had first seen the Dead in 1989. “It’s a little spooky in some ways because he’s internalized the essence of Jerry’s approach,” said Lesh about Kadlecik in 2010. “His voice can be very similar to Jerry’s. Every so often, he’ll sing something in a certain way, and it’s just like déjà vu. I love that. It’s been a long 15 years.”

Possibly because of the fallout from the 2009 reunion tour, Kreutzmann and Hart weren’t invited to be part of Furthur, but it’s unlikely they would have accepted the invitation anyway. Kreutzmann thought it was in bad taste to hire a former Dead tribute-band member. In his memoir, he wrote, “Playing Grateful Dead music with a fake Jerry just seems disrespectful to me.”

“They’ve always had these periods of disaffection and periods of reconciliation,” says Gary Lambert, a former Grateful Dead Productions employee who now co-hosts *Tales From the Golden Road* on SiriusXM. “And they manage to work through all of it.” Sure enough, in late 2011, Weir and Hart popped into a San Francisco club show to sit in with Kreutzmann’s band 7 Walkers. A few months later, Hart sat in his tour bus in Manhattan, preparing for a show with his own band. He was talking to Rolling Stone about new plans for Dead merchandise and movies, but inevitably the topic of the state of the band came up. “Maybe time will heal a lot of the bad feelings we felt during that

[2009] tour,” he said, twirling his drumsticks in the air. “As long as we’re above ground, anything is possible.”

IN HIS NEW YORK OFFICE, PROMOTER Peter Shapiro, looking like the younger, less-angst-wracked brother of comic Richard Lewis, grabs his iPhone and proudly shows off a message from Weir, Hart, Kreutzmann and Lesh that will soon be read on satellite radio: “None of us anticipated the overwhelming outpouring of love and interest following our initial announcement of the shows at [Chicago’s] Soldier Field, and we were blown away by the response,” reads the message in part, signed by all four men.

With the Dead’s five-decade anniversary looming, the question wasn’t whether or

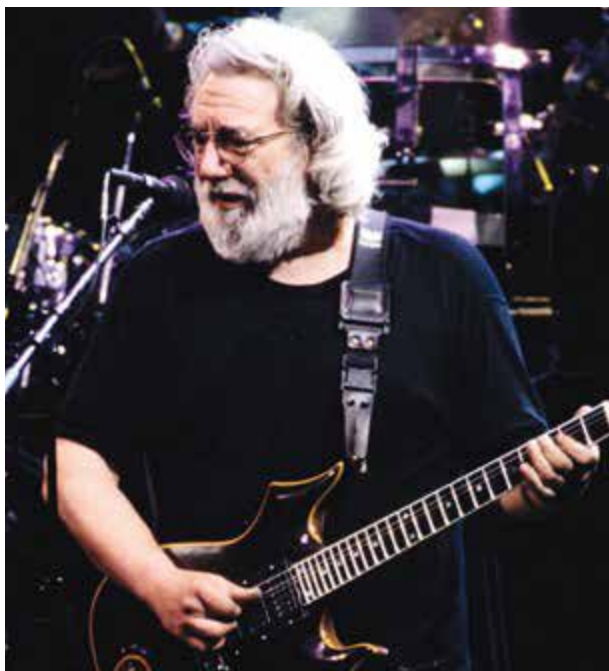
at Madison Square Garden. He received no response from the Dead’s management back then, but now, times – and connections – had changed. In 2012, Shapiro reopened the old-school Capitol Theatre in Port Chester, New York, where the Dead had played memorable shows in the Seventies. Weir had played at one of the theater’s opening nights, and Lesh had signed up for a residency there.

Reuniting the Core Four wouldn’t be easy. Furthur had recently dissolved, a year and a half after an incident at a 2013 show where Weir collapsed onstage, perhaps the result of issues the guitarist had with painkillers for a bad shoulder. Last year, Lesh characterized his relationship with Kreutzmann and Hart as “distant but cordial...I don’t see them at all.”

All four live not far from one another, but have separate lives: Lesh has carved out a cozy musical existence near his home in Marin County, having converted a former seafood joint in San Rafael into Terrapin Crossroads, a barn-like club and restaurant, where he plays regularly. (“Even if I have four shows and a day off and four more shows, it’s doable because it’s close to home,” he said last year.) Hart lives in a sprawling compound in Sonoma County, decorated with gardens, and including a home studio that features a candid shot of the drummer with Garcia. Weir has stayed put in the same idiosyncratic hilltop house in Mill Valley for decades, stocked with Garcia memorabilia, including one of Jerry’s banjos and a Garcia bobblehead doll.

Kreutzmann recently moved back to California after years living on an organic farm on the Big Island in Hawaii. In the months before, word began circulating that his memoir, which was due to be published in May 2015, would include some of the drummer’s unvarnished opinions of his bandmates. The book takes small but pointed digs at Lesh’s and Weir’s songwriting, Lesh’s voice and Hart’s hiatus from the Dead in the 1970s. (Weir, for his part, says he hasn’t read it, because he wants to write his own book someday.)

Yet the door remained open, if only by a crack. Weir told RS in 2014, “We have to do something commemorative. I think we owe it to the fans, we owe it to the songs, we owe it to ourselves. If there are issues we have to get past, I think that we owe it to ourselves to man up and get past them. If there are hatchets to be buried, then let’s get to work. Let’s start digging.” According to Justin Kreutzmann, Bill’s son, “The general consensus around Dead people was, ‘We should do something.’”



Garcia's Last Call

Garcia in June 1995, two months before his death. “A lot of times he would lead by omission,” said Lesh last year.

not the band should commemorate it, but who would be able to pull it together. The potential profits weren’t lost on anyone: At least one major rock manager reached out to the band, and various ideas were floating around, from a slot at Bonnaroo to having each man play with his current solo band at a festival.

It was Shapiro – a Deadhead who caught his first show in 1992 and went on to run the well-regarded jam-band club Wetlands in New York – who won out. Ten years ago, Shapiro sent a letter to the band trying to organize a 40th-anniversary show

When Lesh's first grandchild arrived last year, Kreutzmann sent his former bandmate a warm e-mail, says one source; Weir, Hart and Kreutzmann convened for a meeting in Marin County last summer. "It was a process," Shapiro says diplomatically. When asked to elaborate, Shapiro puts his head down for a while, pauses, and is careful with his response; no one wants to upset this delicate apple cart. "They each wanted to do it in their own way with their own vision. We had to get to a place where it all came together."

Next year, the Dead will be the subject of a new documentary directed by Amir Bar-Lev, with the support of Martin Scorsese. (One of many highlights that will make Deadheads drool in anticipation: never-before-seen live and backstage footage from the band's 1970 trip to Europe, including scenes of Garcia walking the band through "Candyman" before it was recorded for *American Beauty*.) Reunion negotiations were so hush-hush that Bar-Lev, who was filming his documentary during this time, didn't hear one word about any plans. "They kept a pretty tight lid on it," says Bar-Lev. "We were around them the whole time, and nobody said anything to me."

One thing that was never seriously discussed: a full-on Dead tour. Lesh had recently said he was "off the bus – I'm not going to be doing any tours per se." He elaborated on that to *Rolling Stone* in early 2014: "Touring and traveling, one-nighters, that's productive in a way, but it's spiritually deadening. And I came to the realization that at this point in my life, there wasn't enough time left for me to be riding on a bus or sitting in a hotel room. It's hours I'm not being productive in some way. It's hours I'm not spending with my family."

Shapiro says that choosing Chicago was a collective decision. "We had one shot – let's do it in the middle of the country, and everyone can come," he says. "And it was the last place they played." The reunion was on.

ON A FRIDAY NIGHT THIS May, Lesh and one of the latest incarnations of his Friends band were playing at his club Terrapin Crossroads, when a surprise guest popped onstage: Trey Anastasio. Joining the band, which included one of Lesh's sons, Anastasio played two Dead standards – Garcia and lyricist Robert Hunter's "Bertha" and the traditional "Goin' Down the Road Feeling Bad." On the latter, Anastasio peeled off a solo that hinted at Garcia's piercing style while adhering to his own sensibility.

To get to this moment, the band had to confront perhaps the biggest question of the reunion: Who would fill Garcia's shoes onstage? Past players, like Haynes or Jimmy

Herring of Widespread Panic, seemed more closely aligned with one Dead member than others; Kreutzmann's comments about Kadlecik appeared to rule out his participation. One person everyone could agree on was Anastasio, the Phish singer-guitarist who has played onstage with both Weir and Lesh. Anastasio exudes some of Garcia's friendly-Buddha vibe and, just as important, is like Switzerland: a player with no bad baggage. "They're all very comfortable with Trey," says Shapiro. "Musically and as a person. He's easy."

"He's the guy," says Weir of Anastasio. "There are a couple of other guitarists who might be able to handle that load, and one of the guitarists we considered is real good but doesn't sing. Trey really does the whole thing." Anastasio is also a star in his own right, someone who clearly would help fill seats.



"Everybody would have an idea, and Jerry wouldn't like any of them, so he'd say, 'Go figure it out.' It was anti-leadership."

After some negotiations between Shapiro and Trey's manager Coran Capshaw, Anastasio received the final offer around New Year's, in an e-mail from Lesh. "He talked a lot about the healthy relationship, the respect between the band members right now, that he thought it was going to be a real positive experience," says Anastasio. That's unlike two years ago, when Anastasio sat in with Furthur at the Lockn' Festival, and the Phish guitarist sensed problems in the Dead world. "There was definitely some squeak in the wheels between the band members," he says. This time, however, Lesh "wrote that he thought that was all ironed over, and that I could rest assured that it was going to be a good experience."

In a telling sign, Lesh also wrote, "This is the last time I'm doing this." As Anastasio says, "He seemed pretty definitive about that. He wants to put some closure. That's what I'm interpreting."

WHEN THE CHICAGO shows went on sale in January, some were skeptical the band could sell more than 200,000 tick-

ets. When the Dead last toured together, in 2009, sales were strong in some markets and not in others. "I said, 'A stadium? Are they going to be able to sell that many tickets?'" recalls Justin Kreutzmann, who is overseeing all the video aspects of the shows. "And somebody said, 'That's not going to be a problem.'" Millions of ticket requests came in, and the office of Grateful Dead Ticket Sales in the tiny Marin County coastal town of Stinson Beach was inundated with more than 60,000 hand-decorated envelopes (a long-standing Dead-head tradition).

Anastasio has been a focal point for rehearsals, meeting with the members individually to jam. (He's also bought some new effects pedals to help him achieve a Garcia-like guitar tone.) As of early May, he had spent time at Lesh's house, and the two men secretly rehearsed with Weir on the afternoon of May 1st at Terrapin Crossroads, before the club opened. Kreutzmann is said to be exercising daily. Weir, still recovering from shoulder surgery, is practicing blindfolded so he won't look at his left hand and strain his neck. "I have to realign myself and my posture to play the instrument," he says. "It'll have a pretty big payoff if I can do it."

The entire band, which will be joined by Hornsby and longtime post-Garcia collaborator Jeff Chimenti on keyboards, won't rehearse together until mid-June, shortly before the Santa Clara performances. Current plans call for two two-hour sets at each show. Garcia's lead vocals will be split among Hornsby, Weir and Anastasio.

Once the last note of the final night at Chicago fades, the Dead will return to what they've been doing since Garcia died: carving out lives and music of their own, with and without one another. Lesh is planning fall shows with Phil Lesh and Friends, and Weir, Kreutzmann and Hart are rumored to be joining up with John Mayer for a fall tour that may try to extend the celebratory vibe of Fare Thee Well. (Even Shapiro knows that additional shows by the foursome after Chicago "would be bad," coming after the farewell announcement.)

Weir, for his part, is still "a little bit surprised" that the reunion is actually happening. "But I'm happy," he says. "The guys have gotten over their differences and risen to the occasion. Because we owe it to ourselves, every bit as much as we owe the fans who kept us off the streets for 50 years. We owe each other a debt of gratitude."

Some things haven't changed, though: "It's going to be a work in progress until we walk off the stage that last night in July," says Weir. "Just like always."

Additional reporting by David Fricke 

Electric Ladies

The women influencing the dance music scene in India

By Kenneth Lobo



Electrovertz:
Mallika Haydon (left)
and Nina Shah.

Clothes by
Calvin Klein

Woman' is not a genre of music, Mollie Wells, of American techno live act Funerals, once famously said to *Electronic Beats* magazine in 2011. Electronic music's rich history is filled with pioneers like BBC Radiophonic Workshop co-founder Daphne Oram to transgender women Wendy Carlos, who designed synthesizers for the legendary Italian producer Giorgio Moroder. DJs like Austrian techno producer Electric Indigo [Susanne Kirchmayr], Anja Schneider from Germany and Ellen Allien, who founded the electro music label BPitch Control, have been trail blazers both as producers and talent scouts. India's club culture blossomed more recently in the late Nineties, marked by an underground psychedelic trance scene, and the noughties, when drum 'n' bass-inspired music of the Bhavishyavani Collective held gigs in seedy suburban nightclubs. ♡

The

know that in the next 13 years, Indian artists and women in particular would feature at the Southbank Centre in London (Tanvi Rao of Sulk Station), perform at the legendary SXSW festival in Austin, Texas (see Sandunes), run house-and-techno record labels (see DJ Kini) and like our cover stars, The Elektrovertz (Malika Haydon and Nina Shah), plan a multi-city tour through the birthplace of electronic music, the United States.

Haydon and Shah, as indeed all the DJs we've featured, have broken all stereotypes on their run to the top. They've built on their talent and worked equally hard in the midnight glow of their laptops, when the decks have been stacked against them. What they've achieved is in spite of their disarmingly good-looks, not because of them. At the other end of the 'looks' stereotype is Ma Faiza, a true veteran of the scene who has been DJing since 1998, and someone who still gets mistaken for a man, but not as often. "I continue to be out with my sexuality in the hope that this allows other people the chance to be who they really are," she says. "And to accept different ways that may challenge their beliefs and their way of thinking."

Sandunes's (Sanaya Ardeshir) upward trajectory since the launch of her Slybounce EP last year has been fascinating to watch. Her relentless cross-continental, club-to-festival-to-gallery appearance in the past year has rarely been topped by any Indian electronic music. Kini, meanwhile, has thrived on keeping it almost completely local - the monthly District Fifty parties she co-runs in the Mumbai suburb of Bandra will finally see a stellar EP launch and is sure to populate her gig calendar as well.

Trapeze (Akanksha Krishnani) and Tasneem Docttoar are relative newcomers on the scene but their discipline, desire to experiment with fresh sounds and ability to take risks are a welcome addition to a scene that can seem monolithic at times. And Anastasia's EDM-tinged projects are a sigh of relief from the intensity that accompanies India's underground clubbing space. The DJs featured in the cover story are united by their accomplishments but it's not just them who deserve the spotlight.

Women have also exerted their influence at various levels of club culture. Aneesha Kotwani, co-founder of music events agency Regenerate, currently oversees one of the busiest off-season gig rosters. Along with her partner, Bhishma Sagar, she was instrumental in curating two By the Pier day-long events in Mumbai, one of which featured pioneering acid house act, A Guy Called Gerald.

Kotwani says that she combines her passion with patience, which is crucial. "If you've got a good balance of the both and keep moving forward with that drive, it's a given your vision will take shape in front of your eyes," she says. Some of the country's most forward-thinking tours in the past two years have also been facilitated by Shilpi Gupta, Culture Marketing Manager, Red Bull India, instrumental in bringing down Berlin-based duo Modeselektor and Welsh techno producer Benjamin Damage.

Another curator who also debuted her concept last year is Varsha Krishnani. The Project Head of The Secret Garden Weekend, an ambitious multi-sensory two-day festival held in Pune, is ob-

essed with the idea of injecting the right vibe into parties. Says Krishnani, "For me, an event is more of an overall experience that needs to be designed to give the highest form of value." Krishnani and her sister Akanksha (see Trapeze) also form a unique promoter-DJ sibling duo. "Akanksha has the taste, the aesthetics, the creativity and the confidence to explore newer sounds," she says. "She's gutsy with her selections and I like that fearlessness and confidence."

The success of India's female DJs should be tempered with some statistics. A quick survey of India's five top music festivals 2014 (Enchanted Valley Carnival, Magnetic Fields, NH7 Weekender, Sunburn and VH1 Supersonic) will tell you that only 12% of all artists booked there featured women. The figure is less than two per cent when you account for representation in India's biggest booking agencies like Krunk, Regenerate, Soupherb, Only Much Louder, UnMute and Vital Agency). The numbers are on par with those on an international level, according to a survey released by female:pressure, an international network of female artists in the fields of electronic music and digital arts.

What's heartening, Ardeshir says, is that there are more women who are DJs/working in electronic music today than there were in the past five years in India. Says Ardeshir, "It's encouraging that

Ma Faiza



Kini



Tasneem Docttoar



Sandunes



Anastasia



Trapeze

the issues pertaining to gender-minority within the industry are being discussed, shared on open platforms and even addressed by various voices in contemporary music," she says. Akanksha agrees that people are beginning to accept women in the role of a DJ and to respect her for who she is, what she believes in and what she plays. But there are still certain expectations. With slots in line-ups and festivals, she points out for example, "because you are a female DJ, your sound will be calm and beautiful and serene, which is nice to know, but hey, we also like that synth-pop to be grungy, dirty and sweaty, that's a just a small part of it." Ma Faiza is convinced that for real change to occur India needs a revolution - social, radical and political. "People who party in my scene are all from the top 5% of the social strata and income bracket - they have not suffered, they have money and many have access to power," she adds. "The scene here is empty of any social statement."

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Electrovertz

“It’s TIME WE DEBUNK A MISCONCEPTION / that “glamour” and talent can’t be in collusion! / So what if a girl is easy on the eye / doesn’t mean her brain cells die! / Just cuz [sic] our mixing got applauded / doesn’t mean our set was pre recorded! To the one spreading lies with great efficiency / it is you who has an IQ deficiency!” Rolling Stone India’s June cover stars, Elektrovertz [Malika Haydon and Nina Shah], pull no punches when they tell the truth. Haydon’s poetic rejoinder to a recent rumor about their DJing is everything about the duo in two stanzas. They’re talented, witty and sharp, have the looks to make dance floors melt and the beats to drive clubbers crazy. With 90 gigs over the past year [a gig every four days], appearances at Sunburn, Goa and DJing at venues across the country, the twosome have timecoded their presence on the club scene.

While most DJs are territorial about their genres, the Elektrovertz cleverly resolved that dilemma by choosing to do both EDM as well as house and techno gigs under their Malika and Nina alias. It’s a survival choice they made three years ago. “We started out in 2010 playing tech house/techno,” says Shah. “But dance floors would empty out. People weren’t expecting to hear such an underground sound from two girls like us. But we don’t believe in having an ego towards genres that are not our personal preference.”

Shah and Haydon are childhood friends whose mothers were just as close, and arrived in India for social work projects. They both married into Indian families and settled here. Haydon says that they are “practically like sisters and extremely similar in most ways. We’ve noticed when we download music separately we end up with the same tracks.”

The DJ adhesive that binds them together even further was enabled by Brian Fernandes. Fernandes [Kerosene Club/FlipKnot/Fibre Stomp] is one of India’s busiest electronic music DJs with an equally hectic touring schedule. It’s at his Studio 58 that Shah and Haydon attended a DJ course. His assessment? “Nina and Malika are serious and passionate about what they do,” he says, over email from San Francisco. “What I loved about them as students is that they were serious and hungry. That’s what you need for the long haul.” Fernandes has since trained over 15 students but few have made it, and even fewer have stuck around. “I watched them play a few weeks ago,” he says. “People loved them. They looked comfortable, in control, with good body language and had great musical selections. That’s what successful DJs are made of.”

It comes as little surprise when Shah and Haydon pick German heavyweight tINI and Russian techno DJ Nina Kraviz as DJs they admire. tINI rose quickly into prominence through Germany’s crowded electro scene and Kraviz’s flamboyance is second to none. So why go with Elektrovertz? “It stems from our love for electronics,” says Shah. When she adds that the modern classic Access Virus TI and the timeless Mini Moog synth form part of their analogue studio gear, you know they’re going to be just as serious in the studio as they are about getting behind the decks. For now, an American tour is in the making, and a season ahead that’s always going to be better than the last.

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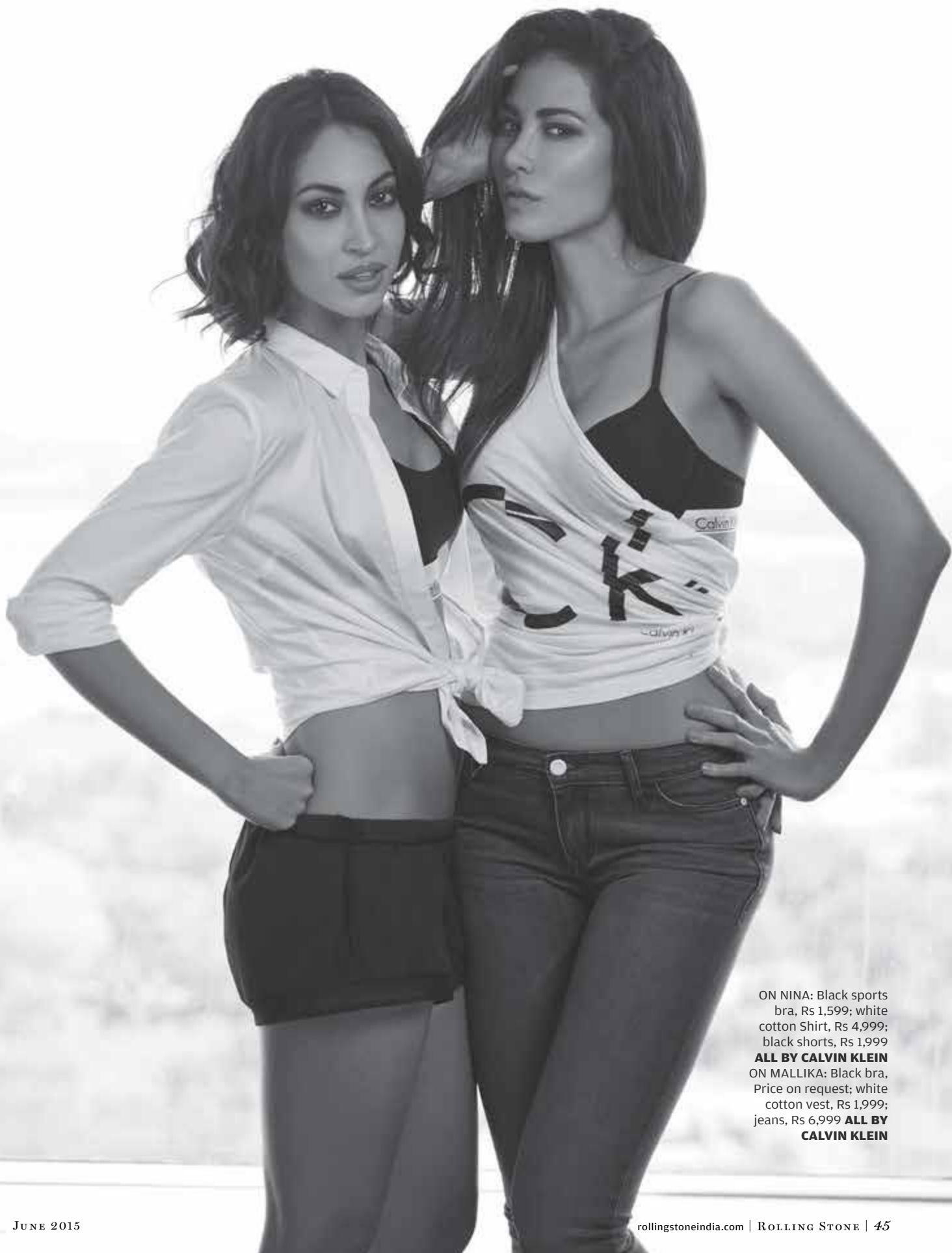
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Ma Faiza

The annual monsoon migration of Indian DJs to Berlin begins in earnest next month. They're all vying for a billing in some of the city's top 900 bars and 200 clubs, aiming to get the best possible slots. One place you'll never see them flyer-ed on is at KitKatClub, one of Berlin's oldest sex clubs. Yet, that's precisely where you'll find DJ Ma Faiza on her decade-long European summer ritual.

"It's like no other venue in the world," she says. "It is the freest space — where anything goes — that I have ever been to. It is beyond belief and challenges any conservative attitudes that you may have. It reminds me that so much is possible with an open mind. KitKat reminds me that anything is possible with an open mind and to have a space where you can be free to express yourself in anyway is a gift."

It's an attitude that defines Ma Faiza and her music. "I have never shied from being truly honest about me, my life experiences, my sexual orientation and my lifestyle choices," she says. India's only openly queer 'queen of electronic music' has been DJing across the country since 1998, and has only recently slowed down, of her own volition. "I've taken steps to limit my gigs to just 50 instead of the 100 plus I used to do," she says. "I feel much better and more soulful doing less gigs and having more time to nourish myself in other ways and bring that back to my music and my performances."

Still, her punishing schedule is something that most DJs would give up their entire collections for. At the time of going to print, Ma Faiza was preparing for a six-week, 20-gig tour spread across major metros and small towns, taking her infectious energy and throbbing sets to every dance floor in the nation. It's another milestone in a career that's seen her run one of the few female-fronted record labels (Masti Music), organise Q-Nites for the LGBTQ crowd and headline festivals old and new. The East-Africa born, British-raised, half-Ismaili, half-Portuguese has overcome all manner of challenges along the way, foremost of which include being mistaken for a man. "I find this very frustrating," she says. "But it has never interfered with my success as a DJ. These days most people know who and what I am. I believe in being real and sharing that realness with the world. I try very hard to stay genuine with myself and everyone I meet and just to be the simple me — warts and all!"



Kini

American house and techno legend Levon Vincent's track "DJSF II" on his Novel Sound imprint last September [a lush, atmospheric banger of a tune] sent Mumbai's DJ Kini scrambling into the studio. She wrapped her head around piano theory, attended master classes from jazz musicians and jammed with a clarinet player. Beyond the lessons, she debated ideas in electronic and classical music with her instructor Leena, bought a pair of turntables, and became intimate with a soft synth called Diva. And emerged inspired.

Fans of the DJ, who have been left craving for more club appearances from her in the past year, now have three sumptuous EPs awaiting release in the latter half of the year. The first of the lot, *Forty Winks Later* will be launched on District Fifty this month, a label named after Mumbai's hotly debated-and-claimed suburb of Bandra, which she also co-founded in April 2013. Says Kini, "The label is a personal venture with a few of my friends. So far, our focus was on promoting and playing music that we love. This year, we've decided to put the music out. It's a labor of love that is coming to soon to a speaker near you."

Another untitled track that Rolling Stone India exclusively previewed is a blissful, rolling wave of a tune, perfect for closing out an intense dance floor workout. If Kini's aim is to make memorable melodies, she's taken several confident steps in that direction. "I've never been someone who's taken in too much by 'trends,'" she says. "The only statement I'm interested in making is to be a record collector and a selector."

The Hyderabad native entered the world of DJing thanks to her house-mate in Australia who owned a pair of decks and a mixer. "After getting comfortable with the technical side of things, I recorded a few mixes and after moving back to India in 2007, I decided to let go of post-MBA aspirations and focus on a career in DJing instead. Her hard-work has seen her work with the teams behind the fêted club Zenzi and the influential Bhavishyavani Future Soundz crew.

Kini adds, "If you believe in your skill, your taste in music and have the courage to push forward your ideas, then the current scene is the best platform to grow as an artist. And now, my focus is to write, play and promote hi-fi music with a generous touch of lo-fi soul."



Tasnneem Doctoar

It was time to make a decision. In late 2012, fresh from a stint on MTV's dating reality show, *Splitsvilla*, Tasnneem Doctoar received multiple offers from TV production houses, movies and advertising agencies. A micro-chip-sized opportunity to plug into the world of show business. Doctoar explains her decision: "The ability to choose an unstable career needs a lot of courage," she says. "I was advised one way, then another, but in the end no-one lives your life but you." It's an attribute that stands out equally in all her sets. Doctoar's Interpretation of Silence series on Mix-Cloud features 15 mixes uploaded in the past year; they have all the earmarks of an exciting new talent. The mixes have carefully thought-out introductions, genre-agnostic selections and the discipline to record the sets she performs at gigs.

Doctoar chose to head to the Beatworx Studio in Bengaluru in June 2013, to take up a course in DJing from friend and mentor Ashwin Baburao [DJ Inferno and one half of sibling DJ-duo Audio Units]. "I fell in love with the routine of learning, listen-

ing, downloading, educating myself," she says. "But I also realised this is not a part-time job." The DJ has already enjoyed returns on that 4X4 karma.

Doctoar has played the opening set for a clutch of the country's top producers — from Delhi-based audio-visual collective B.L.O.T! to Tapan Raj, one half of Delhi electro group Midival Punditz and Jitter — and featured at showcase events like A Day of Slick!. The DJ has moved back to the port city of Surat, where she grew up ["with plenty of blues, jazz and country music, and I could befriend boys without feeling like I was having an affair"] to focus on her production. The DJ is already looking forward to the next season where she hopes to play festivals and have some original tunes under her belt.

It's the stuff that DJ dreams are made of. One detail still rangles. Why *Splitsvilla*? "It gave me a clarity of mind, so I'm here doing what I should be doing," she says. The TV industry surely won't lament one less competitor, but the DJ scene has benefited with fresh blood and plenty of taste.



Anastasia

Google sportstars who double up as DJs and you're likely to come across a list that includes basketball star Shaquille O'Neal, Olympic legend Usain Bolt, former Chelsea footballer Pat Nevin, American fencing star Race Imboden and former tennis player Anastasia Ito Malhotra. Anastasia switched from serving aces to dishing out beats in 2010, when an injury forced her to reconsider career choices. "I came to one of the crossroads in my life. I decided music was the way to go," she says. Taking inspiration from her tennis legends Monica Seles, Steffi Graf, Martina Hingis and Martina Navratilova, Anastasia decided that if she had her "heart and mind in the right place, you can achieve almost anything." Five years on, Malhotra is one of India's leading EDM DJs.

She has combined skills and initials with DJ-and-life partner Whosane! (Hussain Babbai, one of the scene's longest surviving DJs) on twin projects: WA (an electro-progressive-trap project) and WA-TEC (deep house and techno), releasing the three-track

ethno-techno *Blockbuster* EP under the latter moniker in January this year. "We've been spending more long hours in the studio, collaborating with various singers and DJs like Ankytrixx (Ankit Kocher) and Brianoid (Brian Fernandes)," she says.

"After meeting Hussain, my music experience jumped to another level. Since then, he has been my mentor. Imagine living with your mentor," she says, citing the DJ, who she met in 2010, as her biggest influence. And despite playing at arenas and clubs across the country, she says that Dance Ganesh, an annual electronic music procession held during the Ganapati festival in Mumbai, is one of her most spectacular experiences. Curated by DJ Asad Zaidi, the event draws over 10,000 followers and has been running for 15 years. Says Anastasia, "I can't describe the feeling — standing on that truck with thousands of people in front and behind you dancing away. The whole city is there, from the older women in saris to youngsters, all castes and creed, beyond social status and stature, all together dancing as one. It's magical moments like that, that change the world."

Sandunes

When global heavyweight house DJ Skream [Oliver Jones] name-checks you in an interview with *Fact* magazine [May 2014], saying he's excited about your music, the pressure can be telling. But Sandunes [Sanaya Ardeshir], who we named as an Artist To Watch Out For in 2013, has delivered possibly one of the most thrilling calendar years by any Indian electronic music artist in recent memory.

Ardeshir kicked off last April with an octogenarian Parsi Western set in Mumbai [check out the video for 'Good to You']. A month later, she released the EP-everyone-wanted-to-name *Slybounce*, and then blitzed through the rest of the year with a relentless gig schedule across cities and continents: the National Centre for Performing arts with keyboardist Nicholson, the OneBeat residency in the States in October, debuting the Sandunes Ensemble at the Pune edition of NH7 Weekender, the Border Movement Sound Lab experiment at the Kala Ghoda Festival and another 12-date run through four cities in the States, including gigs at the famed SXSW festival in Austin, Texas.

Says the 26-year-old producer, "It's been wild, really. I've had residencies, the [Sandunes] Ensemble gigs, the installations/collaborations. Even in terms of the music I have been playing, it felt fairly diverse with DJ gigs and new live sets." She even found room to get into the gallery space with the Memory Lamp Project at TARQ in Mumbai. Ardeshir is nonchalant about her *annus mirabilis*. She says, "I think it's a consequence of my personality type. I'm easily bored and my interests span a broad range — I like diversifying and exploring new aspects of the musical world. I'm not sure I've even scraped the surface. Usually, the act of committing to the work is the reward in itself." Her consistency is as remarkable as her head-down hard work. We attended one of her DJ gigs at the Den, in Mumbai last year, where she nailed a swinging garage set. Ardeshir loves that "you can really be a part of the party when you're DJing. It's not quite that way for me when I'm playing live. Mostly because playing live, in my case is the equivalent of playing an instrument by yourself on stage." She's also worked hard to separate her DJ and live sets "to a clearer capacity" to continue enjoying both forms of performance.

It puts the DJ-producer in distinctly rarefied territory, encouraging and challenging others to up their game. When you ask her what the odds are of finding a Parsi woman who is a live electronic music artist and a DJ in the dwindling numbers of the Indian community? Ardeshir reads out of her *Slybounce* notebook for a quick quip: "I know a ton of musicians, producers, studio guys and music enthusiasts who happen to be Parsi," she says. "And in a broader sense, it's not such a rarity-Parsis are known to love their music as much as their *bun maska*."





Trapeze

DEEP, HYPNOTIC AND EXPANSIVE - AKANKSHA Krishnani's sets are - what every Indian DJ claims in their profile - refreshingly eclectic. Ever since the turn of the year, when Krishnani launched her Trapeze project, and let go of her previous AK Vinagreta avatar (a tribute to her time in Spain), the DJ's sounds have turned even more experimental. Trapeze has absorbed influences from British maverick Damian Lazarus's label Crosstown Rebels and Berlin-based imprint Keinemusik. And you're likely to hear everything from Argentine singer-songwriter Atahualpa Yupanqui to flamenco singer José Monje Cruz and Ethiopian-jazz artist Mulatu Astatke in her transitions. Says Krishnani, "Blending these sounds with minimalism is what I thrive on now." It's little wonder that Krishnani gets booked to play thumping techno slots at 2am to playing live with Rajasthani folk musicians.

Her extensive gig calendar is balanced with an entrepreneurial career in the contemporary art world, where she plays the role of curator. At Studio X in Mumbai, an open space of collaborative work run by the Columbia University, New York, Krishnani initiated the Synth City project last year, to capture the sounds

of Mumbai by young Indian electronic music producers. It's also during her time at Studio X that she got hands-on with synthesizers. "One of my best friends and one of the finest music producers Shahveer Sidhwa, lived a block away from the workplace. I sat with him in the studio and toyed with the console every evening after work," she says. "It played a big part in enticing me to experiment and to go ahead with 'DJing'."

Her latest venture, Art Throng, an online portal for contemporary art, will also include several collaborations with sound artists. The first of several, she says, is with her favorite Japanese sound artist, Ryoji Ikeda, set to go live in the first week of June. And her contemporary art background informs her work as a DJ substantially. "Before selling a painting, I like to present a story behind the canvas and not just the mere oil on it," she says. "It's a little similar in this [the DJing] context as well." As the domestic season winds down, Krishnani is looking forward to a tour of Spain in August, returning to the Mediterranean coast where she's spent a large part of her life. "I remember every summer going for these swims and brunches and swarming myself in tapas and all sorts of Spanish food," she says. "I can barely wait."

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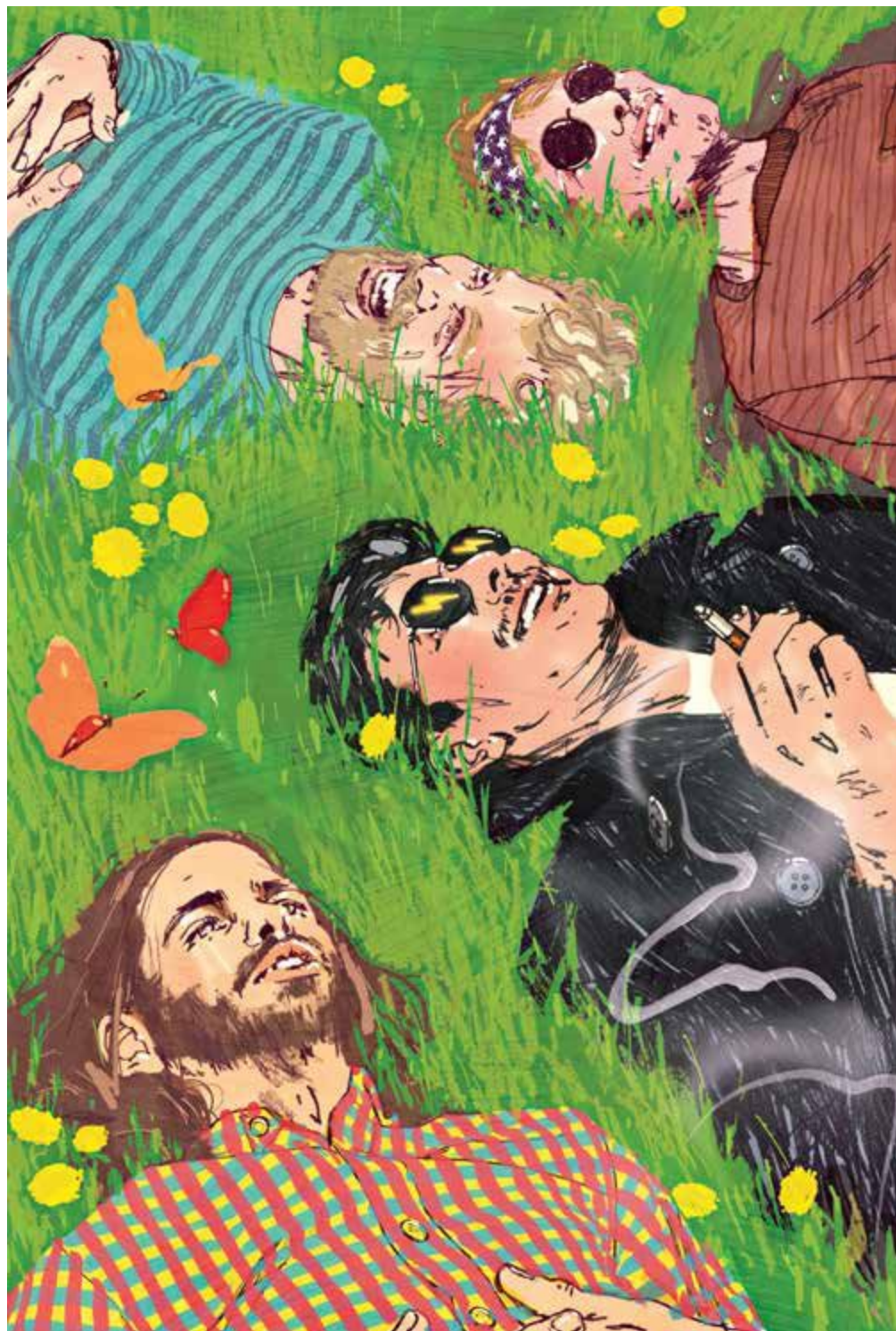


Stuff
India

THE WORLD'S BEST-SELLING GADGET MAGAZINE

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Mumford & Sons' Electric Feel



The leaders of the folk revival plug in – and set their sights on some of rock's biggest peaks



Mumford & Sons

Wilder Mind

Gentlemen of the Road/Glassnote

★★★★½

BY JON DOLAN

Mumford & Sons are the defining act of the past few years' folk revival, but there's always been more rock in their blood than that label suggests. Cathartic, heart-swelling anthems like 2010's "Little Lion Man" and 2012's "I Will Wait" are arena rock through and through, even if they are mostly acoustic – just ask anyone who has seen one of the band's sold-out shows.

So the news that Mumford & Sons planned to use electric instruments more prominently than ever on their third studio album was no real surprise. They wrote most of *Wilder Mind* at producer Aaron Dessner's Brooklyn studio, and at times, the music resembles the darkly textured indie rock of Dessner's main gig, the National, by way of classic influences like Jackson Browne and Dire Straits. It's at once driving and stately, ornate and headlong. "Ditmas," named after the neighborhood where it was written, shifts from a rhythm track that's as taut as a krautrock jam into a huge chorus stacked high with hard-charging riffs. "The Wolf" is open-air garage rock with shades of Springsteen, while "Snake Eyes" falls between

Radiohead at their coziest and the AOR pastorals of the War on Drugs.

As his bandmates pull back on their galloping strum and shout-along harmonies, Marcus Mumford, too, moves in a subtler direction with his vocals. On 2010's *Sigh No More* and 2012's *Babel*, he often sang in a barrel-chested growl. Here his singing is more restrained and agile, leaning on the vulnerable, world-weary side of his lower register to explore an intimacy that can get pretty dark: "I look at you all torn up/I left you waiting to bleed," he sings against languid chords on "Cold Arms." Instead of a traditionalist troubadour, he sounds like a complex rock frontman.

Folkie fans shouldn't be too alarmed, though. Even amid all the new sounds on *Wilder Mind*, the impassioned earnestness that made Mumford & Sons stars is still their driving force. The same cleareyed, full-hearted intensity that set the table for fellow U.K. roots newcomers like Laura Marling and Jake Bugg animates highlights like "Believe" and "Only Love," where lyrics about balancing doubt and hope in the face of fading romance take on a universal power. "Open my eyes, tell me I'm alive," Mumford sings on "Believe," as rolling drums and heroic guitar flares carry him up to the rafters.

A few of the songs on *Wilder Mind* directly address the band's stylistic growth. On "Broad-Shouldered Beasts," Mumford takes his woman to Manhattan for a big night out dancing "under dizzy silver lights," only to find she's scared of the freedom he's offering. And then there's the album's sharpest moment, the coursing breakup tune "Tompkins Square Park," where the singer demands that someone meet him in the East Village for one last desperate shot of love. The sentiment is Springsteen, the guitars are straight-up Strokes, and even if it's not going to work out for the relationship in this song, the music itself bristles with self-assurance. Welcome to the modern age, guys.



JACKET OF MANY COLORS: James

My Morning Jacket's Blissful New Morning

The Kentucky band's seventh album is its happiest ever, with shades of prog and soul

My Morning Jacket *The Waterfall* ATO/Capitol ★★★★★¹/₂



My Morning Jacket are contrarians: Southern rockers who have no truck with Nashville, jam-nation heroes who don't really jam, classic-rock acolytes with indie-rock sensibilities. It's made them a genre of one, and a band that can tap the past without sounding like throwbacks. *The Waterfall* is their latest case in point – a fusion of synth-wrapped Eighties pop, prog-rock and Philly soul that still connects like a heady MMJ record.

A breakup LP that lands somewhere near acceptance, *The Waterfall* might be the band's sunniest, and trippiest, album. Bent notes stretch the fabric of these songs like flashbacks. "Tropics (Erase Traces)" opens on an arpeggio recalling Yes' signature "Roundabout" – it's orchestral folk rock with a surprisingly logical psych-metal denouement. "In Its Infancy (The Waterfall)" recalls the Band's "Chest Fever" alongside keytar-style squeals and digital ghost images; "Thin Line" conjures the Stylistics via Pink Floyd. Jim James' high tenor and easy, sublime falsetto remain the band's soul, in both senses. They're especially radiant on "Only Memories Remain," a meditative tune with a burbling guitar solo that feels like a Pacific sunset behind vapor-pen clouds, a perfect balance of the medicinal and the recreational.

KEY TRACK:
"Only Memories Remain"

WILL HERMES



Leonard Cohen

Can't Forget: A Souvenir of the Grand Tour

Columbia/Legacy

★★★★★

The 80-year-old master lifts the curtain on his rehearsals

The fourth live album to come out of Leonard Cohen's 2008-2013 world tour is a fascinating glimpse into his creative process. More than half of its 10 songs were recorded in soundchecks, where Cohen and his band were able to test new tunes and refurbish standards like 1971's "Joan of Arc," heard here in a lustrous duet with Sharon Robinson. The highlight is a cover of George Jones' classic alcoholic's lament "Choices" – rather than try to go toe-to-toe with the most powerful voice in the history of country music, Cohen renders the song in a resigned, conversational rumble, amping up its grim power by singing it with uncanny closing-time cool.

JON DOLAN



Torres

Sprinter Partisan

★★★★¹/₂

Intense emotions power a songwriter's breakthrough LP

Singer-songwriter Mackenzie Scott (a.k.a. Torres) detangles years of spiritual unrest on her stirring second album. She recorded the set in an old children's nursery in rural England with co-producer Rob Ellis (PJ Harvey) and Portishead guitarist Adrian Utley, who help give her steely reflections a ghostly vibe. The scalding grunge fury of "Strange Hellos" is tempered into the smoldering tones of "New Skin," a gentle meditation on baptism. "If you do not know the darkness," Scott crows, "then you're the one I fear the most." On the title track, she looks back at her own religious upbringing, illuminating the long-running face-off between the skeptic and the Holy Spirit that both preside in her.

SUZY EXPOSITO



Tyler, the Creator

Cherry Bomb Odd Future

★★★½

A shock-rap renegade lightens up, sort of, on Album Four

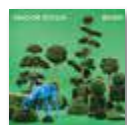
After a trilogy of sonically bleak, ostentatiously psycho albums, Odd Future's leader has flipped his nihilistic glower into a sinister smile. Featuring cameos by jazz fusion OG Roy Ayers, Lil Wayne and Kanye West, Tyler's self-produced new one flows from the Neptunes tribute "Deathcamp" to the summery whimsy of "Find Your Wings" and "Fucking Young." Tyler still spends at least half his rhymes reminding us how few fucks he gives, and his bright new sound often comes spiked with petulant noise. But a certain humanity peeks through: "I'm raisin' the stakes/Mom, I made you a promise: It's no more Section 8." What a sweetie.

JON DOLAN

A Big Hit of California Sunshine

Snoop Dogg teams with Pharrell Williams for a bright nostalgia trip

Snoop Dogg *Bush* Columbia ★★★½



Snoop Dogg's 13th album plays like the flip side to Kendrick Lamar's *To Pimp a Butterfly*: Where Lamar used funk to dramatize the struggles of a Compton native, *Bush* uses the genre's rhythmic groove to portray Los Angeles as a smoky, sexy, sunshiny wonderland where every day feels like a block party. The one and only D-O-double G is back home after a minor detour to Jamaica as Snoop Lion – and he's reunited with Pharrell Williams, his most effective producer since 2000, who helps him dig deeper than ever into the Seventies vibes that have peppered his career.

From the moment opening track "California Roll" hits its "Drop It Like It's Hot"-ish bass line, *Bush* is a pleasant stroll down memory lane. Heroes like Stevie Wonder (who plays harmonica on the album opener) and Charlie Wilson (who sings on "Peaches N Cream") help transport the album to Snoop and Pharrell's favorite decade. (The intro to "This City" also carries strong echoes of George Clinton, a collaborator and inspiration since Snoop's *Doggystyle* days.) Neither of them is a stranger

KEY TRACKS:

"California Roll,"
"This City"



THE RETURN
OF G-FUNK:
Dogg

to the rapper – he featured Wilson on 2004's "Signs" and sampled Wonder on 2006's "Conversations" – but here they are subtly woven into the mix, rather than just adding some cred to the liner notes.

There's a timeless quality to Snoop's goofy charm; when he sings lyrics like "I'm just a squirrel, tryna get a nut," he sounds looser than most rappers with 20-plus years of experience could ever imaginably be.

BRITTANY SPANOS

Boz Scaggs' History of Soul

The singer pays loving tribute to Fats Domino, Al Green and many more

Boz Scaggs *A Fool to Care* 429 ★★★



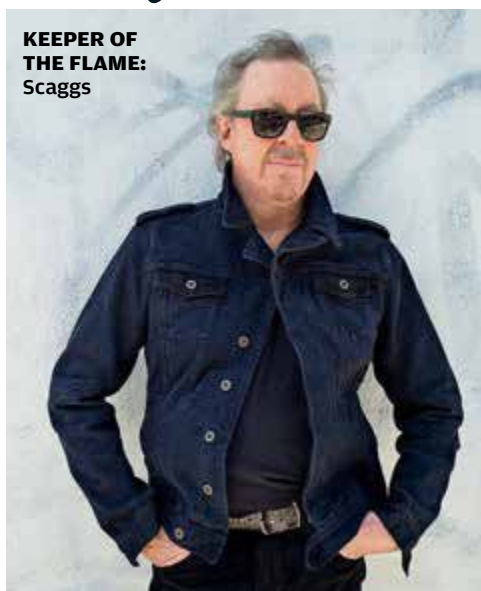
A Fool to Care may not have a concept as linear as some of Boz Scaggs' other recent albums (2013's Southern-fried *Memphis*, the jazz standards on 2003's *But Beautiful* and 2008's *Speak Low*), but it sure does tell a story. These 12 songs map out a concise history of American soul, with a heavy dose of New Orleans strut – including the title track (a hit for Fats Domino) and Huey "Piano" Smith's "High Blood Pressure" – and a dollop of Chicago sweetness (the Impressions' gorgeous "I'm So Proud").

Backed throughout by a stellar group of studio aces – guitarist Ray Parker Jr., bassist Willie Weeks and drummer Steve Jordan, who also produced the album – Scaggs' well-worn, textured voice deftly navigates this range of styles. His lone composition on *A Fool to Care*, the sly blues "Hell to Pay" ("Between the bank boys and the lawyers/I don't know where it ends"), is a sparkling duet with Bonnie Raitt, featuring her signature slide-guitar mastery. Versions of Al Green's "Full of Fire" and the Spinners' "Love Don't Love Nobody" even

KEY TRACKS:

"I'm So Proud,"
"Full of Fire"

KEEPER OF
THE FLAME:
Scaggs



recall the slinky, disco-fied grit of Scaggs' 1976 smash, *Silk Degrees*. The wild card, though, is the album's final track, an aching duet with Lucinda Williams on the Band's "Whispering Pines." So what if it's not an R&B song? The emotion conveyed proves that, in the end, soul is where you find it.

ALAN LIGHT



Hop Along

Painted Shut Saddle Creek

★★★★

Rising Philadelphia band finds power in the everyday

What's up with Philly lately? The most-mocked city in indie rock is suddenly bustling with fantastic young guitar bands like Hop Along. Their second album is a deep dive into raw emotions and ragged melodies. Frances Quinlan's voice veers from a breathy whisper to a full-throated bourbon howl, from the ballad "Horseshoe Crabs" to the pop-punk surge of "Sister Cities." She builds her songs around quiet moments – waiting on your ex's new girlfriend at a restaurant, squirming at a funeral. But even when she yelps, "The world's gotten so small and embarrassing," Hop Along know how to make these tiny moments feel huge.

ROB SHEFFIELD

On the Shelf



Miss Balmain Dream by Balmain

The cool simplicity of this timepiece makes it a perfect match with both the lady's conservative and extravagant outfits. It features an attractive choice of dial faces ranging from a silver tone enhanced by Balmain's arabesques to a white mother-of-pearl or a black guilloché pattern, with its strap available in a steel bracelet or a white/black leather strap. At the same time, its durability and dependence can't be understated, with Swiss quartz movement and water resistance up to 50 meters.



Lady-Datejust 28 by Rolex

Available in 18-carat yellow or Everose gold or 950 platinum, this timepiece is the new revolution in both design and function for lady's watches. The new watches are equipped with caliber 2236, a new self-winding mechanical movement that delivers a new level of chronometric performance, and their oyster case is also guaranteed to be waterproof to a depth of 100 meters. Both watches have a President bracelet with three-piece solid links, with the chocolate-brown timepiece's bezel set with 44 brilliantly-cut diamonds.

SHEEN by Casio

Inspired by the "sheen" concept of a shining watch, this model by Casio fuses both beauty and practicality. It is available in a white and a brown model; the white watch features an array of Swarovski crystals in twelve sparkling colors, while the brown piece has crystals in three hues with a gradation finish on the watch face. The "practicality" trait comes in with both the SHEEN models including a light guiding ring gently illuminating the watch face to help the wearer read the time at night.



Calvin Klein Microbelt by Calvin Klein

Sophisticated yet subtle, this timepiece for women brings vintage inspirations into the future. Coming with a silver or black dial, it features a double-orbital shape rendered in polished stainless steel or PVD pink gold encircling the dial. The watch is accented by its strap available in white, black or beige satin, or a mesh design in polished stainless steel. Each watch is enhanced by the Calvin Klein logo at 12 o'clock, and is water resistant to 3 bar.



Novak Djokovic Special Edition by Seiko

In a special dedication to the tennis legend, this latest collection of Kinetic Perpetual caliber watches pays tribute to Djokovic's skills in both design and function. Each dial of the four watches in the collection reflects the conditions in which Djokovic plays his sport (clay, grass and hard court), also carrying his initials on the case back. Being of the Kinetic Perpetual caliber, these watches are powered by the movement of the wearer, and goes into sleep mode when taken off while preserving the exact time and date. Water resistant up to 10 bar.

Quickster Lugano by Tissot

Inspired by hazy summer days and with a sporty nautical theme, this is the latest addition to Tissot's Quickster family of watches. Its striped NATO strap pays tribute to Europe's beautiful Lake Lugano, and also offers two additional straps – a blue-base bracelet with white stripes and an all-blue bracelet – to switch the first one with depending on your moods. With a unique bezel design and an aluminum ring to add a cool edge, the Quickster Lugano perfectly fuses stylish design with functionality.



I.N.O.X Red by Victorinox

Marking the 130th anniversary of Victorinox, this timepiece pushes the limits of watch strength and endurance by being able to survive a 10-meter drop onto concrete, extreme temperatures, attack by corrosive substances and even being run over by a 64-ton tank. The watch has a striking visual aesthetic as well, with its iconic red color as well as a removable protector made of nylon and silicone to adapt its look to any situation.



T-Touch Expert Solar by Tissot

If its cool and edgy design isn't enough, Tissot's new T-Touch Expert Solar is filled to the brim with technical features for the savvy adventurer. Powered entirely by solar energy, the watch features a perpetual calendar with day and week numbers, two alarms, two time zones, weather forecast with relative pressure, an altimeter, backlight and more. The watch also includes new features like a bezel with compass rose rather than numbers, and the Super Lumi-Nova arrow on the minute hand that will enable you to read the time easily at night.



Cara Delevingne Special Edition by TAG Heuer

Inspired by British supermodel, actress and "It Girl" Cara Delevingne, this special edition has a disruptive yet sophisticated design. Its elegant case, faceted lugs and clear dials highly contrast its dominantly black and charcoal-gray color treatment. The appliques and hands are rose gold-plated for that feminine touch, with versions featuring a diamond-studded bezel also available. The back of the watches have a more personal touch from Delevingne; the back of the case is stamped with a majestic lion head to denote her star sign, and the back of the strap bears her signature itself in rose-gold.

Spring-Summer 2015 Collection by Swatch

Swatch's latest collection of eye-catching watches will bring to your mind images of ice-cream, sailboats, beach days, and other classic Spring and Summer motifs. Choose from such refreshing designs as Red, White & Blue, My Pet & Me and Mediterranean Dolce Vita, each with their own uniquely designed dials, straps and bright color schemes. The collection even features a Gran Turismo model for all you car-racing enthusiasts out there.





Desire Black by Dunhill

Everything from the ingredients to the packaging of this fragrance has been designed for the bold, charming and seductive Dunhill gentleman. Desire Black incorporates a scintillating blend of classic ingredients from top to bottom, like black pepper, saffron and cyprus oils, luxurious Turkish rose, and the citrus essences of Bergamot, Grapefruit and Petitgrain. All of this is cleverly packaged with an ingenious front facet detail and cap design, showing Dunhill's typically British edge.



2015 Summer Fragrance by Issey Miyake

Enjoy a blast of freshness and color with the latest summer fragrance by Issey Miyake. Composed by master perfumer Alberto Morillas, the fragrance for women expresses its femininity with tangy notes of pink grapefruit and litchi, with sparkling passion fruit and guava in the middle notes. The fragrance variety for men mixes the freshness of kiwi with spicy notes of coriander and slightly bitter grapefruit, with added woods to bring sensuality and depth.

The Sinner by Police

Evoking the infamous bestselling erotica novel Fifty Shades of Grey, this fragrance is designed to be the ultimate statement of domination and masculinity. It consists of citrus and spices in the head notes followed by a fierce Fougere accord accompanying the dynamic chords of burnt-scented spices. Even its glass bottle encased in a pair of handcuffs is a risqué symbol of transgression. Christian Grey approves.



Homage à l'homme Voyageur by Lalique

With its deep-blue color reflecting a "transatlantic" theme, this fragrance is a twist on Lalique's original Homage à l'homme. This woody and masculine scent features bergamot and cardamom in the top notes, citrusy vetiver with accents of papyrus and patchouli in the heart notes, and a sensuous dry-down of amber and vanilla. The perfume bottle itself has been designed by none other than master bottle designer Thierry de Baschmakoff.



Icon by Police

Like the American Bald Eagle, this new fragrance by Police is an innovative symbol of majesty, elegance and transgression. The glass bottle itself is modeled after the bird, with a geometrically intricate design and light refractions created in the glass. The fragrance itself plays on contrasts, with fruity and spicy facets of strawberry and pink pepper in the head notes, with the heart and dry down notes consisting of elegant aromatic notes and deep woody ones.





Luna Rossa Extreme by Prada

This masculine fragrance embodies the strength and spirit of the celebrated Luna Rossa sailing team. The mix of ingredients in this is powerful yet perfectly balanced, with top notes of zesty bergamot, black pepper and lavender, sensual heart notes of balsamic labdanum and juniper berries, and a tenacious base of lavender and vanilla. The deep-black and textured packaging invokes the intensity of the ocean as well.



CLUB by Azzaro

This fragrance echoes the carefree nightlife and club culture of the 1970s. Its aroma consists of passion fruit and pomegranate at the top for that dazzling burst of freshness, and the woody mellowness of Cashmere wood, crystal musk and black vanilla in the drydown. The elegant packaging evokes 70s nightlife as well, with a black, silver and gun-metal grey color scheme and the cap made to resemble a disco ball.

Mystique Forest by Victorinox

Capturing the vibrant and untouched spirit of the Swiss forests in a bottle, this feminine fragrance will give you a sense of freshness and balance. Its top notes contain a fresh contrast of fig tree leaves with yellow lemon and cardamom, while its middle notes have the floral harmony of Magnolia sustained by carrot seeds and oak tree.



Nike Free Socfly by Nike

The Nike Free Socfly takes its cue from its 1986 predecessor, the Nike Sock Racer. These shoes are all about simplicity, avoiding unnecessary elements to make itself a natural extension of your feet. They have Velcro straps instead of laces for easier use, and a seamless and breathable mesh upper designed for maximum comfort and breathability for your feet.



Palisades Vulc from Vans

Functional and trendy, the Palisades Vulc collection from Vans are a must for any woman's wardrobe. The flats combine skate shoe roots with the casual style and total comfort, that are unique to the surfside category. The pair is given a washed canvas treatment for a slightly vintage look. This style promises attention along with astonishing toughness and comfort.



Sunset Collections by Levi's Shoes

Levi's is all set to release its Sunset collection of shoes to complement the summer months. Its wide range of footwear is available in both low lace-up and slip-on in a variety of colours and vibrant graphics. Whether you're strolling through the park or unwinding with a game of volleyball at the beach, these shoes will give you that fresh and relaxed feel for the summer while also putting a spring in your step.





Spring-Summer 2015 Collection by Blackberrys

This latest collection by Blackberrys takes its cue from the luxurious and hi-fashion lifestyle of the French Riviera. Its color palette and fabrics evoke the Mediterranean coastline with red-blue shirts, plaids, pastel colors, wine tones and others. This Spring-Summer collection applies this aesthetic to a wide range of shirts, T-shirts, polos, suits, vests, linen pants and cotton trousers designed for business, leisure, nightlife and urban wear.



Spring-Summer 2015 Collection by Grasm

Offering a wide range of contemporary casual shirts, this latest collection by Grasm is a combination of comfort, style and energy for the modern-day man. Choose from denim, linen and cotton shirts in a variety of warm colors and quirky prints. Smart and easygoing, this collection provides quality material at affordable rates, the ideal deal for the trend-savvy urban male on the go.

Autumn-Winter 2015-2016 Collection by Ray Ban

A symbol of experimentation, functionality and good design, Ray Ban have reinvented their Aviator, Wayfarer and Clubmaster styles of eyewear in their latest collection. Choose from a range of new models with different colors and shades, a variety of frames made from exquisite materials like wood and gilded metal, and various styles. Go for a sophisticated look or an ultra-cool makeover with this extensive range of eyewear.



Sun Shield Apparel by Wrangler

This new range of summer clothing by Wrangler takes its name quite literally. All the tees, shirts, jeans and non-denims in this range have been treated with a finishing technology that reduces heat-build-up and provides protection from UV rays. This means you can even choose from the darker colors in the Sun Shield range without worry of extra heat absorption. Beat the heat figuratively and literally with this new range of stylish yet practical clothes.

Full Circle by Zippo

Personally selected by Zippo owner George Duke and designed by his son Grant Duke, this lighter truly commemorates the history of the iconic brand. It consists of an Armor spectrum lighter with a deep and intricate carving of a never-ending spiral with highs and lows of tactile engraving. Only 12,000 of these lighters have been created, and each comes in a special commemorative box within which is a special brass card explaining the Full Circle design as a symbol of the Duke family's commitment to the brand.



GIGS

ATTACK AND ASSAULT

Mumbai thrash metal band Devoid played a powerful set at the second edition of Urban Assault in Mumbai



SPLIT PERSONALITY

Vocalist of Mumbai alt-rock band Split Garreth D'Mello owned the stage at Hard Rock Cafe, Mumbai



ALTER GROOVE

Brit band Alt-J's drummer Thom Green at his kit - minus the cymbals as always - at VH1 India's Live at Emerge festival in Mumbai



BURNING BRIGHT

Saurabh Roy, frontman of pop punk band The Lightyears Explode in his element at Hard Rock Café in Mumbai



DIVYA AGARWAL (DEVOID); RON BEZBARUAH (SPLIT, ALT-J); RAVI JAIN/ HARD ROCK CAFE, MUMBAI (SAURABH ROY)

GIG CALENDAR

TAJ GATEWAY REVOLUTIONS

The Taj Gateway Hotels in association with Rolling Stone India presents 'Revolutions - The Freedom Series,' the ultimate tribute gig to rock legends. Revolutions will be held in Mumbai for the first time this month. The show features tributes to Pink Floyd, Led Zeppelin and The Doors. The line-up includes Think Floyd (Delhi) - Pink Floyd tribute, Grey Shack (Chennai) - Led Zeppelin tribute, Luke Kenny & the Band (Mumbai) - The Doors tribute.

June 4th

**HARD ROCK CAFÉ,
WORLI**
rollingstoneindia.com



Chennai's Grey Shack will play a Led Zep tribute in Mumbai

BANGALORE OPEN AIR 2015

The fourth edition of Bangalore's premier metal music festival is set to bring some of the biggest names in extreme metal music to Bengaluru. The festival will be headlined by British grindcore legends Napalm Death, Austrian blackened death metal band Belphegor and Colombian black metallers Inquisition on June 6th. The headlining gig will also include support performances by Indian extreme metal favorites like Undying Inc., Orator, Gutsplit and Plague Throat.

June 6th

**THE ROYAL ORCHID
RESORTS, YELAHANKA,
BENGALURU**
<http://www.bangalore-openair.com/>

BOA 2015 PRE-GIGS

If that's not enough, Bengaluru's metal fans will

be in for an extra-special treat as Bangalore Open Air 2015 will also host pre-gigs around Bengaluru city between May 31st and June 5th in venues like The Humming Tree, the Indigo Live Music Bar, The Warehouse and Vapour Pub & Brew. These pre-gigs will feature the finest bands in India's metal scene like Kryptos, Dying Embrace and Eccentric Pendulum, with the Vapour Pub & Brew also hosting the finals of the Wacken Metal Battle India 2015 on June 5th.

Abaddon, Supermash, Hellwind, Killers Breed, Albatross
May 31st
1522 THE PUB, BENGALURU

Dirge, WitchDoctor, The Grim Mage, Primitiv
June 1st
THE HUMMING TREE, BENGALURU

Stark Denial, Antakrit, Dark Desolation, 1833 AD

June 2nd

**THE BIG PITCHER,
BENGALURU**

Necrophilia, Grossty, Piss Scally, Pisakas, Escharified

June 3rd

THE WAREHOUSE, BENGALURU

Eccentric Pendulum

June 4th

INDIGO LIVE MUSIC BAR, BENGALURU

Kryptos, Dying Embrace, Slohawk

June 5th

VAPOUR PUB & BREW, BENGALURU

<http://www.bangalore-openair.com/>

FUZZCULTURE

The Delhi-based electronic rock group will be touring the country in support of their debut album NO, released on May 12th via Universal Music. Catch

their sets at a Hard Rock Café near you in Pune, Mumbai and Gurgaon this June.

June 4th

HARD ROCK CAFÉ PUNE

June 11th

HARD ROCK CAFÉ, MUMBAI

June 18th

HARD ROCK CAFÉ GURGAON
<http://www.facebook.com/fuzzculture>

MADBOY/MINK

This Mumbai-based musical duo of Imaad Shah and Saba Azad is known for their fresh mix of electro, disco and funk music. They will be playing select gigs in Mumbai and New Delhi this June to launch their upcoming EP, *Union Farm*. While the new EP will retain their disco funk vibe, it also includes their first Hindi song. Also expect

Shah to take to both the guitar and the decks.

June 5th

ANTISOCIAL, NEW DELHI

June 6th

BLUE FROG, MUMBAI
<https://www.facebook.com/MADBOYMINK>

BHRIGU SAHNI FT. AGNEYA CHIKTE

A guitarist and Berklee graduate who has jammed with the likes of Karsh Kale and Grammy award-winning singer-songwriter Angélique Kidjo, Sahni is in the middle of his first India tour this year. Sahni will be joined by Mumbai percussionist Agneya Chikte, who has worked with Indian musical heavyweights like Shankar Mahadevan and Taufiq Qureshi.

June 5th

CAFÉ NEMO, MUMBAI

June 14th

SIN ENVY PRIDE, PUNE



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THE PLAYLIST

OUR FAVORITE SONGS, ALBUMS AND VIDEOS RIGHT NOW



1. Miley Cyrus, Laura Jane Grace, Joan Jett “Androgynous” video

“Androgynous” was one of the most powerful songs on the Replacements’ 1984 classic *Let It Be*. These three stars turn it into a rallying cry for equality on this freewheeling, joyful live performance for Miley’s LGBT-youth charity.



2. Mark Ronson feat. Mystikal “Feel Right” video ◀

New Orleans fast-talker Mystikal does a mean James Brown impression on this highlight from Ronson’s new album, *Up-town Special*. In the clip, it’s performed by a badass grade-schooler at a talent show. Best use of the “rapping kid” video concept since Biggie’s “Sky’s the Limit” back in ’97.

3. Albatross “In The Lair of Dr. Hex”

Mumbai horror metallers Albatross have three guitarists churning out melodies and riffs, a madcap-ranged vocalist in Biprorahee Das and a great origin story for their band, as well as mascot Dr. Hex [portrayed by bassist Riju Dasgupta]. In the midst of some chunky guitar work, they paint the albatross as one of the most metal birds. And that’s just one of the song-stories off their eight-track album, *Fear From the Skies*.



4. Sharon Van Etten “Just Like Blood”

Feeling the pain? Feel it even more vividly with this sublime bad-relationship ballad from I Don’t Want to Let You Down, the Brooklyn singer-songwriter’s new EP (due in June).

5. Steven Tyler “Love Is Your Name” ▶

Yes, Steven Tyler has gone country – and it’s actually kind of awesome. His vocals on this power ballad are so great, we’d love a whole album with a cooler Nashville producer.



6. Prince “Baltimore”

His Purple Highness heard Baltimore’s pain all the way up in Paisley Park, and offered this gentle protest song in response. “Peace is more than the absence of war,” he sings. It’s both sweetly tune-ful and genuinely deep.



EXPERT OPINION



Waka Flocka Flame

We asked the Atlanta rapper – who’s working on his Floc-kaveli 2 album between commitments for his presidential campaign – to tell us what he thought of five songs.

OLD

Motörhead “Ace of Spades”

I love it! I love the energy. All I can think about is a fucking all-out mosh pit.

Public Enemy

“Don’t Believe the Hype”

Instant classic. It’s self-explanatory. Why would you believe the hype? Goddamn, there’s a lot of hype out there, even today. And I love how raw the performance is.

Rage Against the Machine

“Killing in the Name”

Let’s be real: This shit literally sounds like one of my shows. Hell, yeah. It’s one of my new favorites.

NEW

Alabama Shakes “Don’t Wanna Fight”

When I hear Alabama Shakes, I think of when my wife and daughter and I are in the house together. This is some ultimate Saturday, clean-the-house, smoke and chill music.

Chedda Da Connect “Flicka da Wrist”

This is turned-up! I like the memes they made of it on the Internet, with some guy overseas doing the flick of the wrist.

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